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KIM et al.

(54) **MOBILE TERMINAL HAVING TOUCH SENSOR-EQUIPPED INPUT DEVICE AND CONTROL METHOD THEREOF**

(76) Inventors: **Jun-Hee KIM**, Seoul (KR); **Sang-Yeon LIM**, Seoul (KR); **Seong-Yoon CHO**, Seoul (KR); **Jae-Keun KIM**, Gyeonggi-do (KR); **Hoi-Chul KIM**, Seoul (KR)

Correspondence Address:
KED & ASSOCIATES, LLP
P.O. Box 221200
Chantilly, VA 20153-1200 (US)

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A mobile terminal having a touch sensor-equipped input device and its control method are disclosed. The mobile terminal includes: a user input unit in which a keypad-printed layer and a touch sensor overlap with each other; and a controller that controls an operation mode of the user input unit in a touch pad and/or a touch keypad mode according to whether or not a cursor is in use.

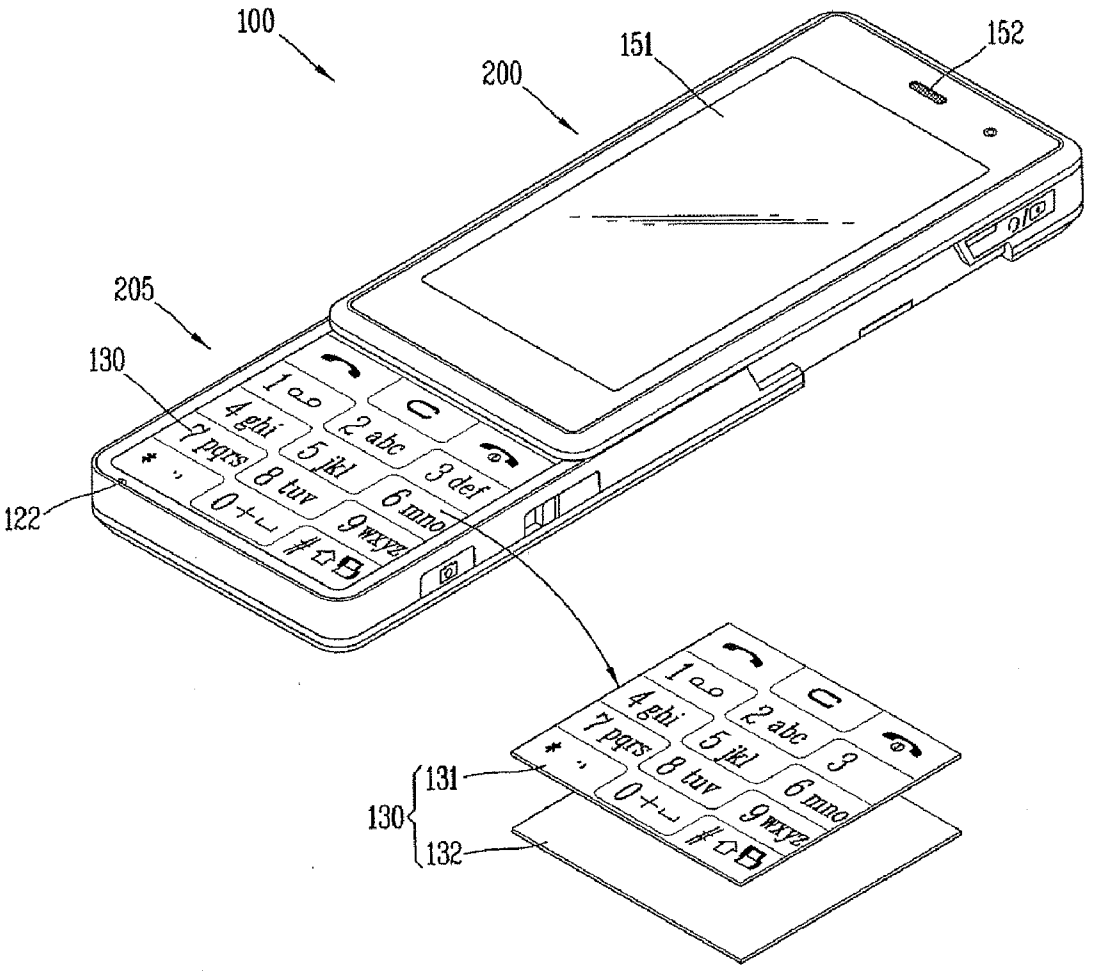


FIG. 1

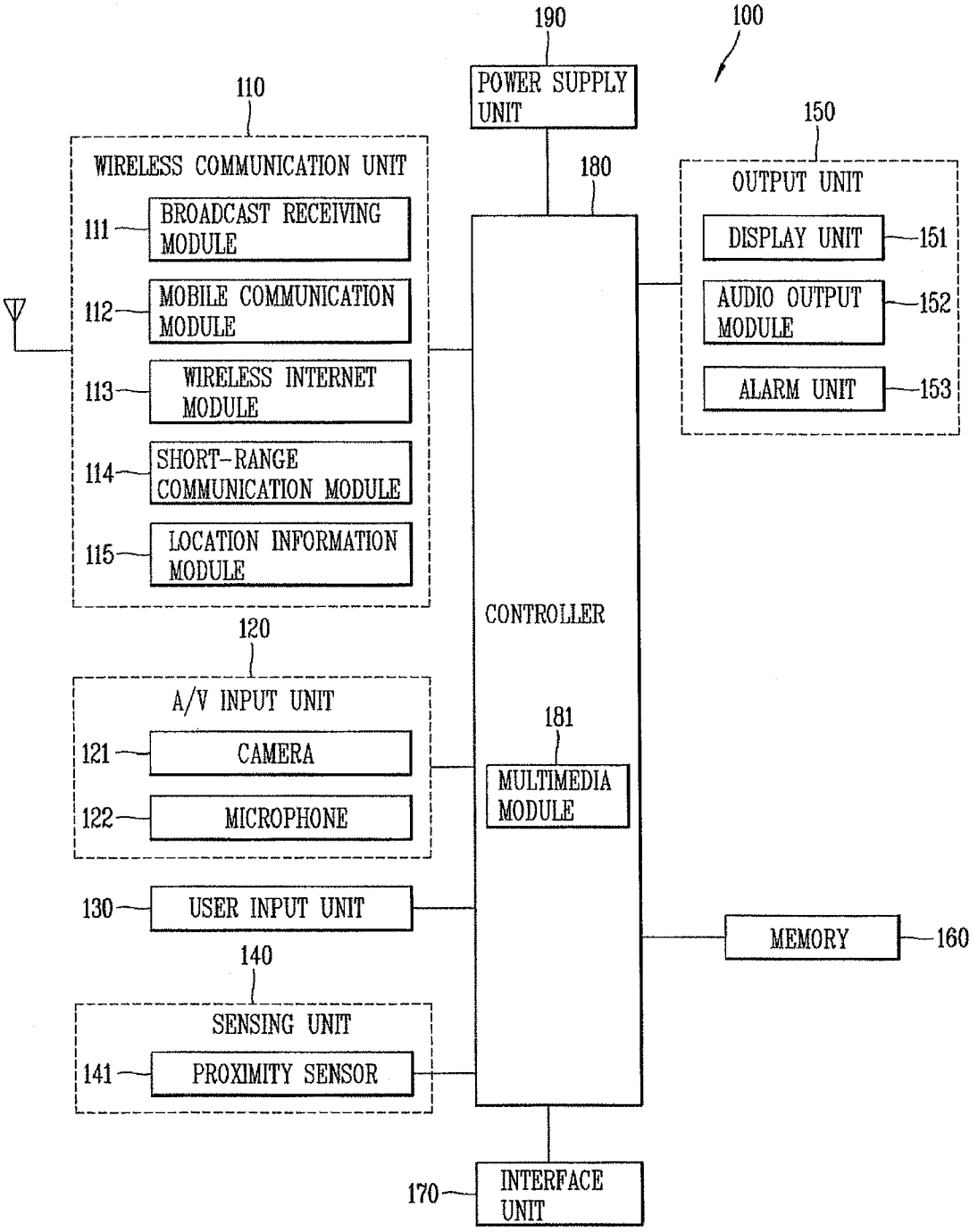

190
100
POWER SUPPLY UNIT
110
150
WIRELESS COMMUNICATION UNIT
180
OUTPUT UNIT
111
BROADCAST RECEIVING MODULE
DISPLAY UNIT
151
112
MOBILE COMMUNICATION MODULE
AUDIO OUTPUT MODULE
152
113
WIRELESS INTERNET MODULE
ALARM UNIT
153
114
SHORT-RANGE COMMUNICATION MODULE
115
LOCATION INFORMATION MODULE
CONTROLLER
120
A/V INPUT UNIT
181
121
CAMERA
MULTIMEDIA MODULE
122
MICROPHONE
130
USER INPUT UNIT
MEMORY
160
140
SENSING UNIT
141
PROXIMITY SENSOR
170
INTERFACE UNIT

FIG. 2

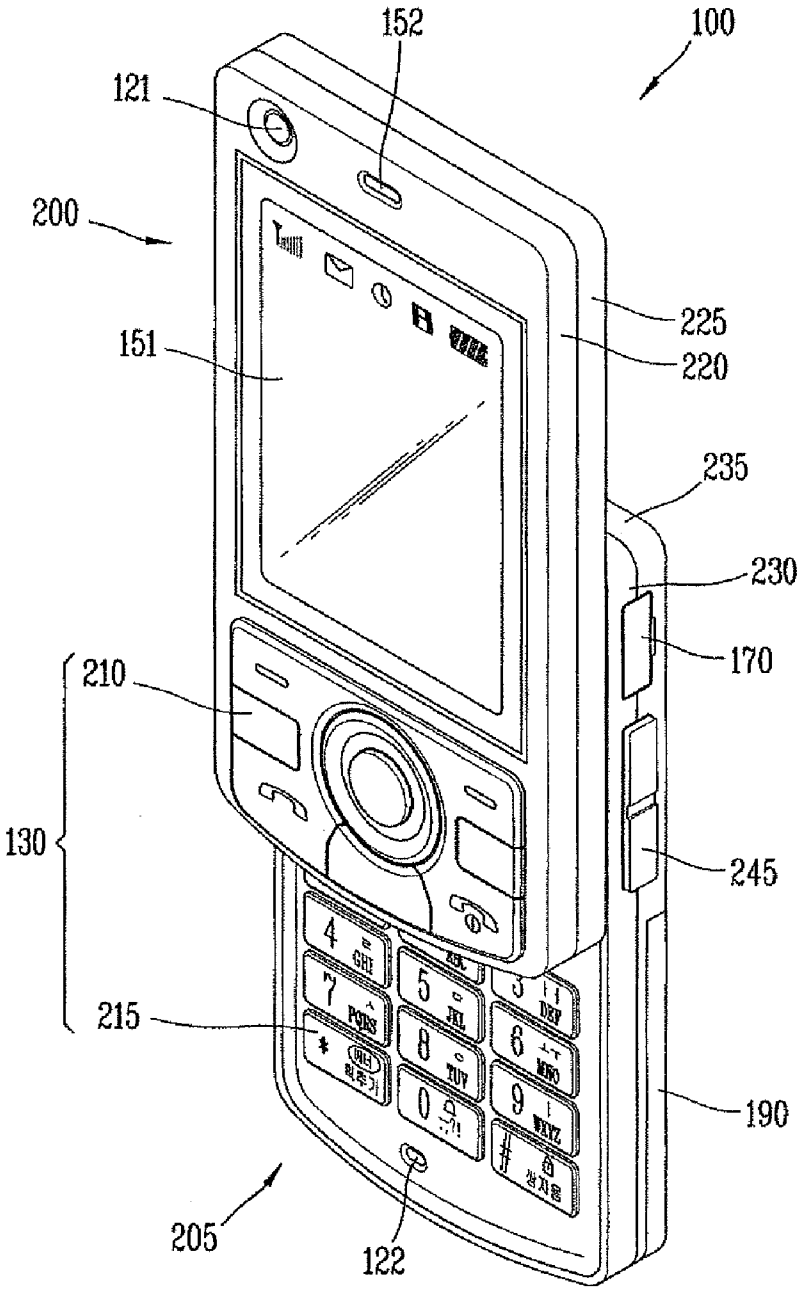

152
100
121
200
225
151
220
235
230
210
170
130
245
215
190
205
122

FIG. 3

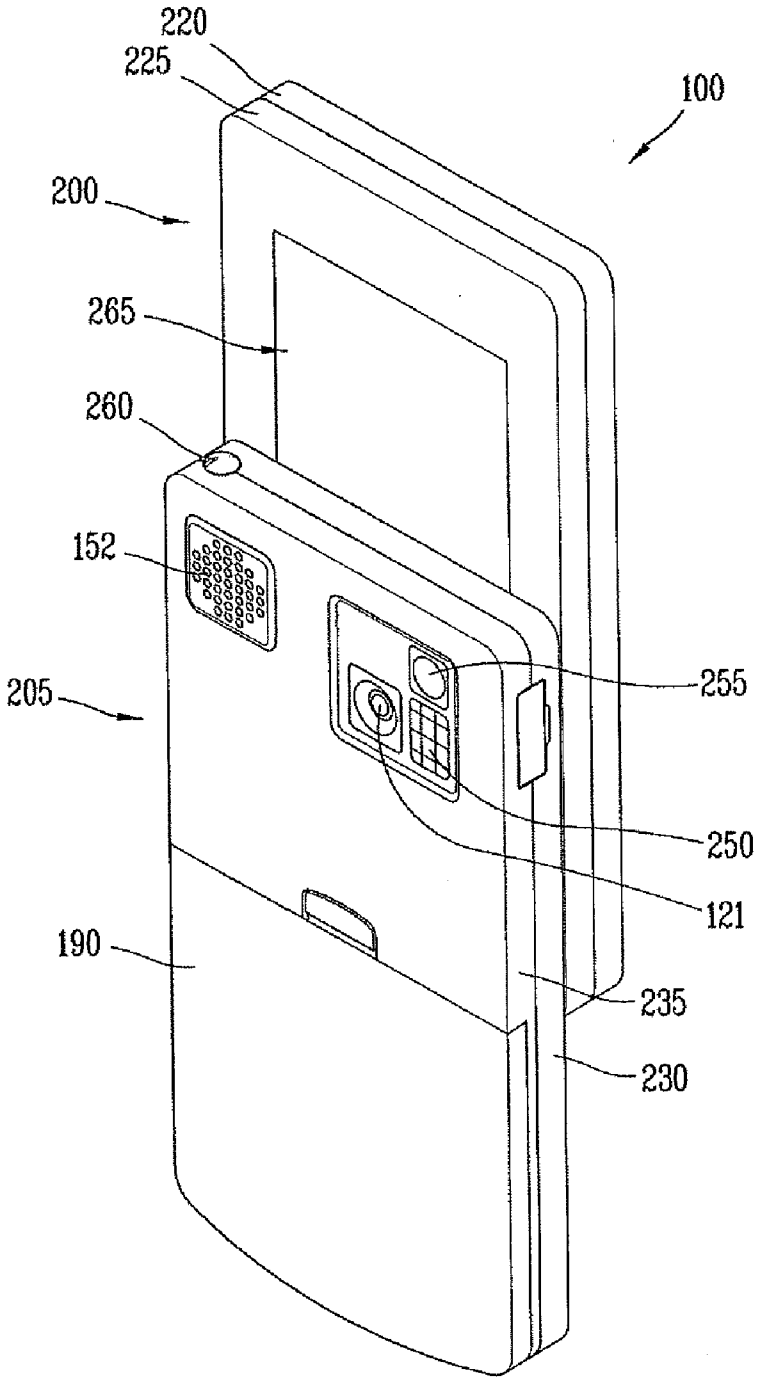


FIG. 4

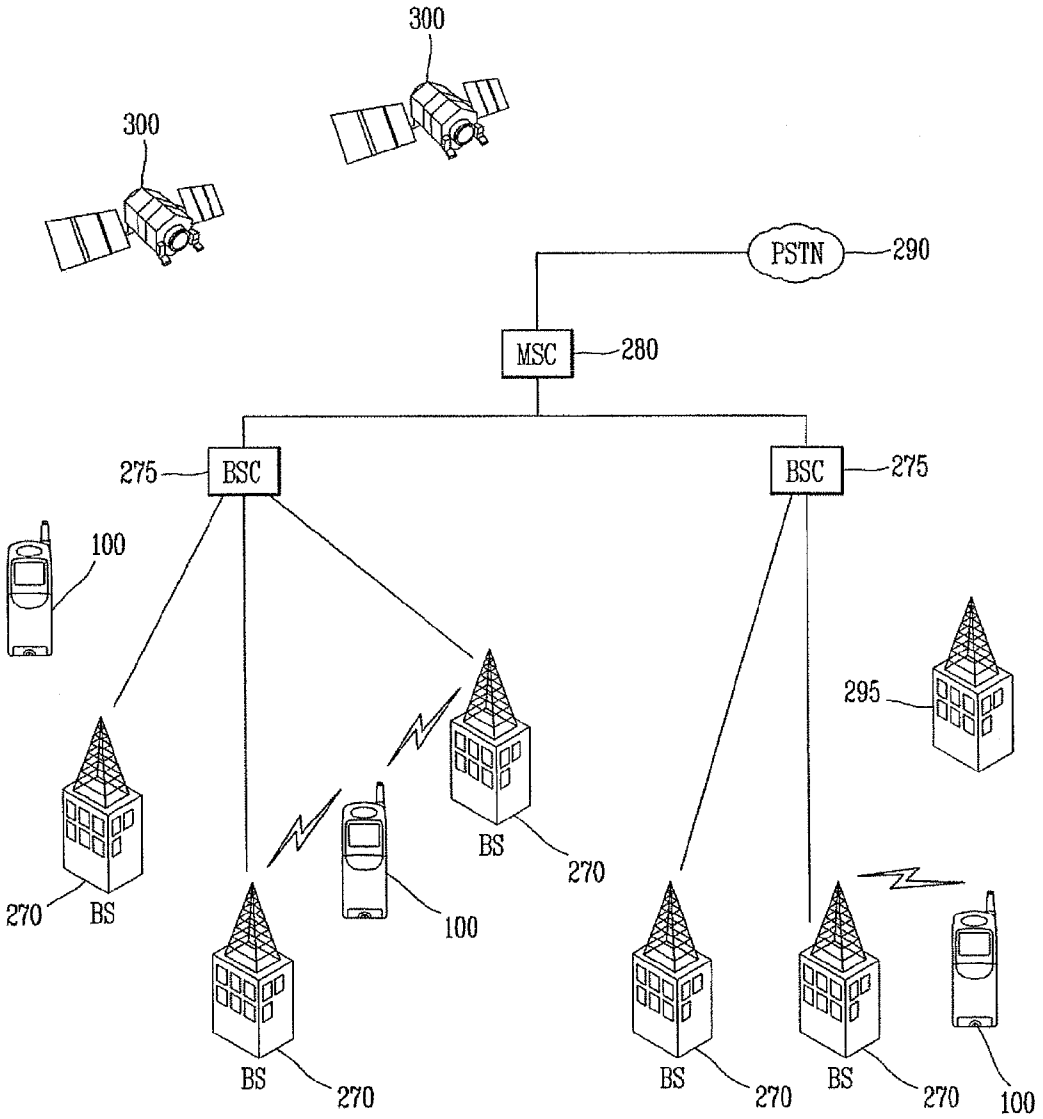

300
300
PSTN
290
MSC
280
275
BSC
BSC
275
100
295
BS
270
BS
270
100
BS
270
BS
270
BS
270
100

FIG. 5

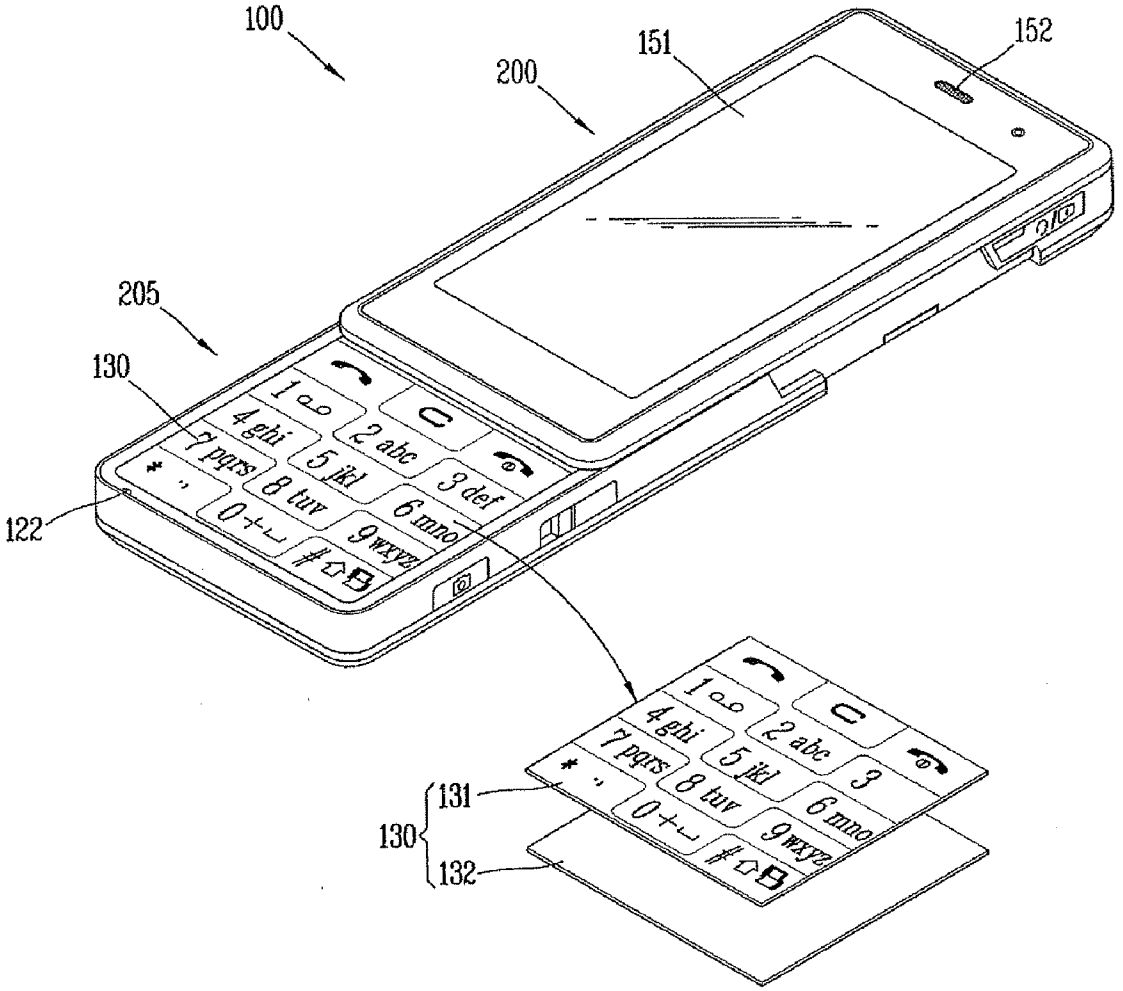

100
200
151
152
205
130
122
131
132
1
4 ghi
7 pqrs
2 abc
5 jkl
8 tuv
3 def
6 mno
9 wxyz

FIG. 6

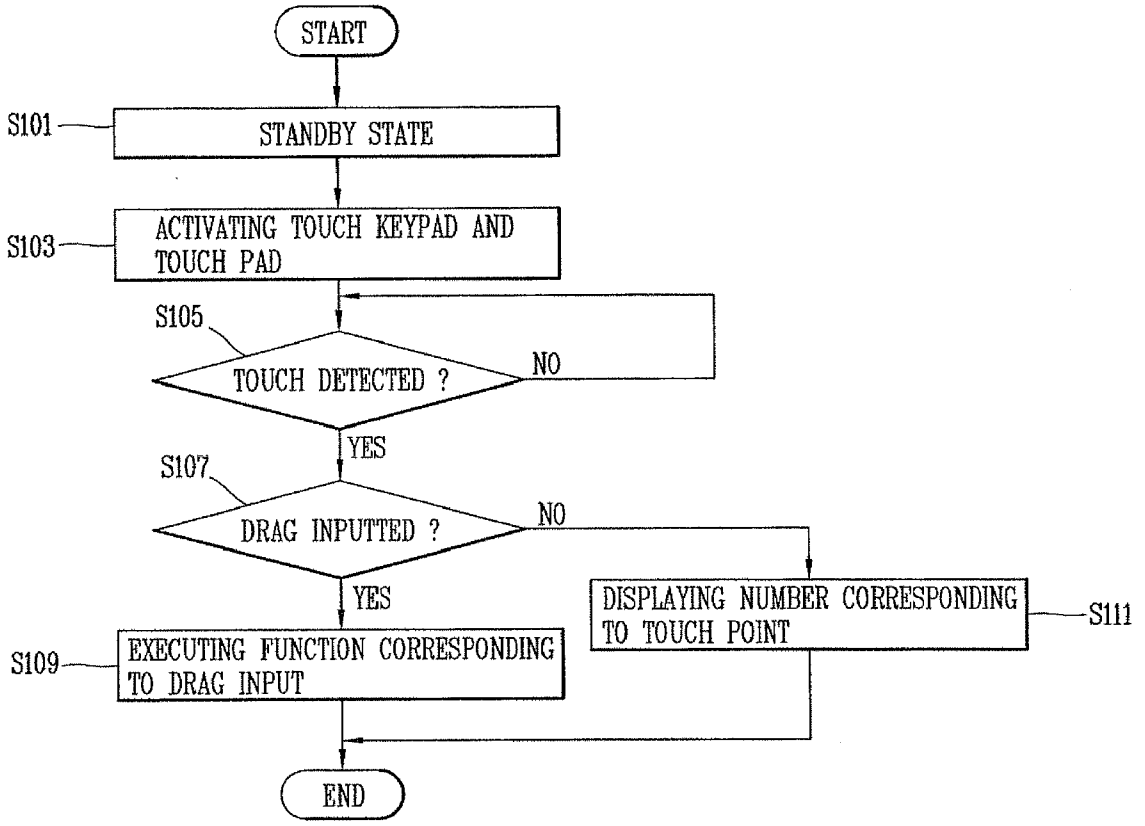

START
S101
STANDBY STATE
S103
ACTIVATING TOUCH KEYPAD AND TOUCH PAD
S105
TOUCH DETECTED ?
NO
YES
S107
DRAG INPUTTED ?
NO
YES
S109
EXECUTING FUNCTION CORRESPONDING TO DRAG INPUT
DISPLAYING NUMBER CORRESPONDING TO TOUCH POINT
S111
END

FIG. 7

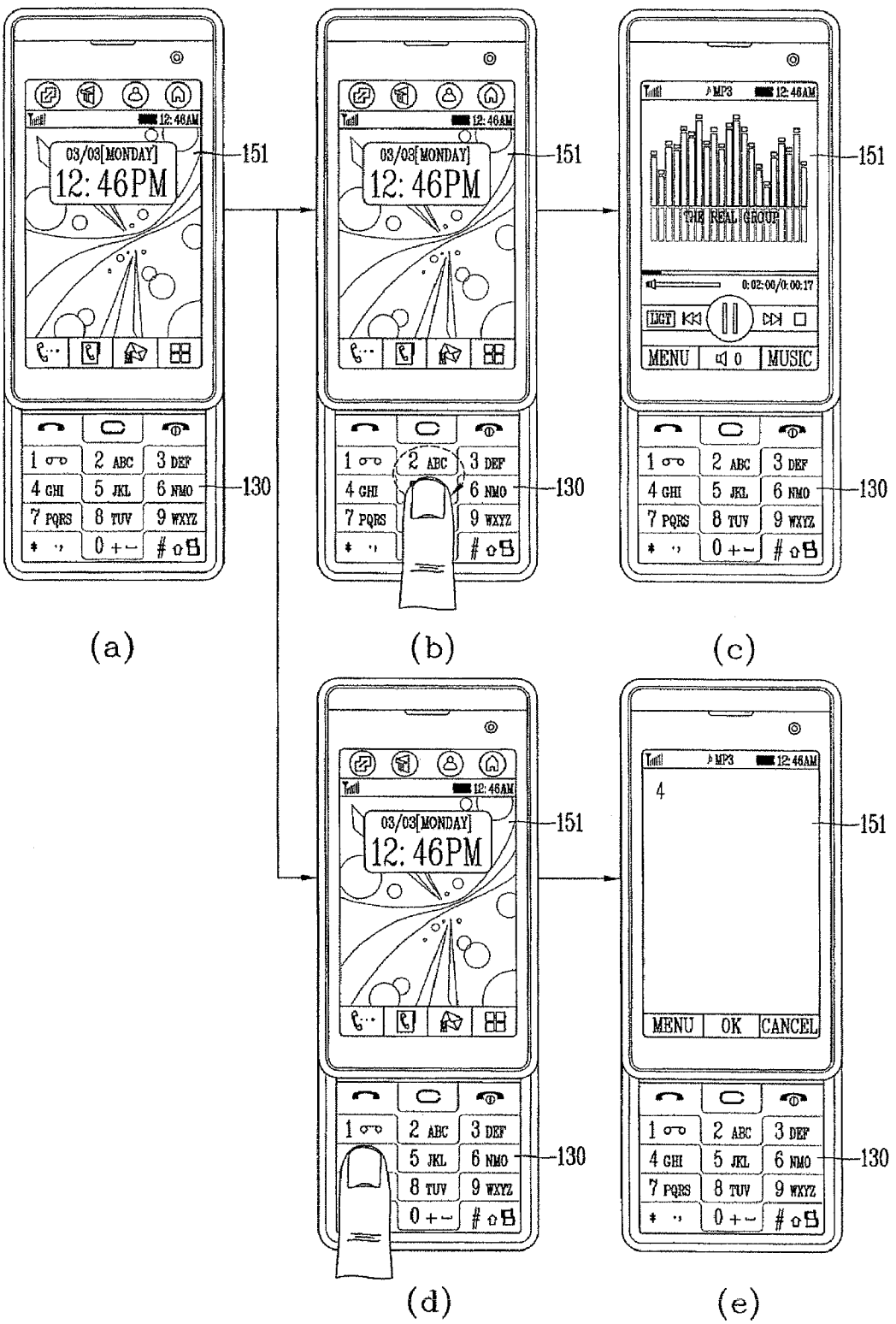

03/03[MONDAY]
12:46PM
151
130
(a)
(b)
(c)
(d)
(e)
MENU
MUSIC
OK
CANCEL
THE REAL GROUP
4

FIG. 8

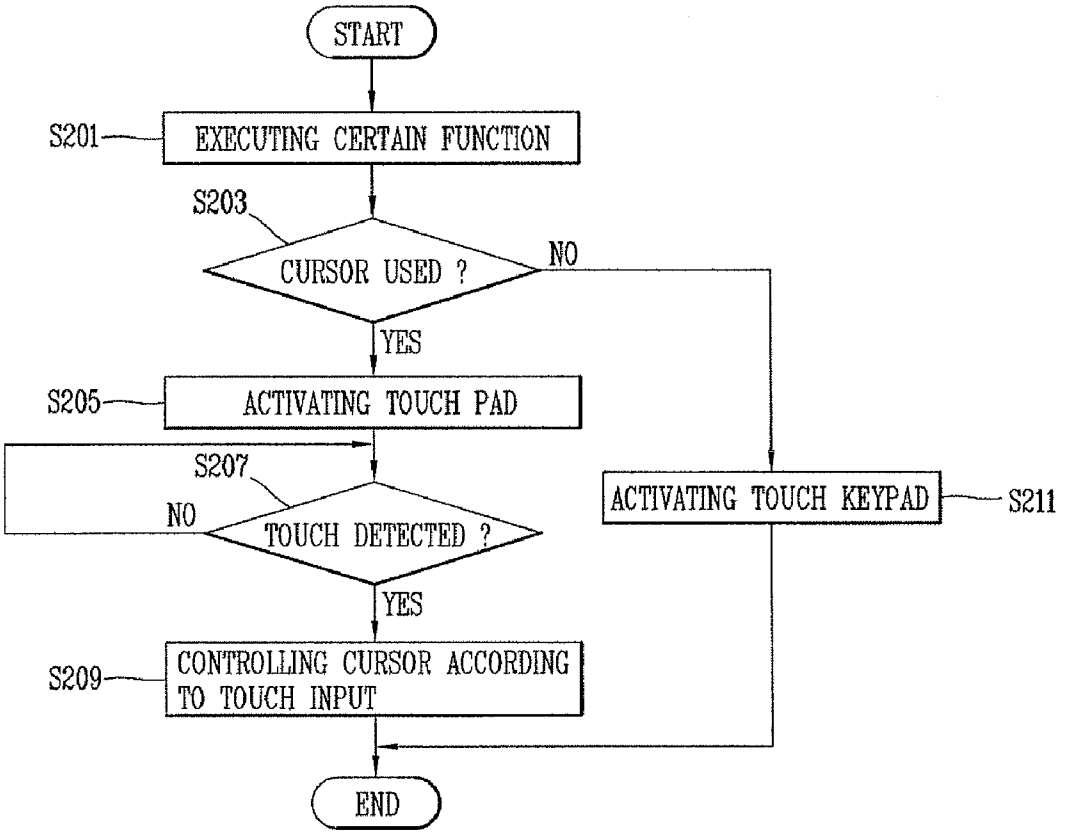

START
S201
EXECUTING CERTAIN FUNCTION
S203
CURSOR USED ?
NO
YES
S205
ACTIVATING TOUCH PAD
S207
NO
TOUCH DETECTED ?
YES
S209
CONTROLLING CURSOR ACCORDING TO TOUCH INPUT
ACTIVATING TOUCH KEYPAD
S211
END

FIG. 9A

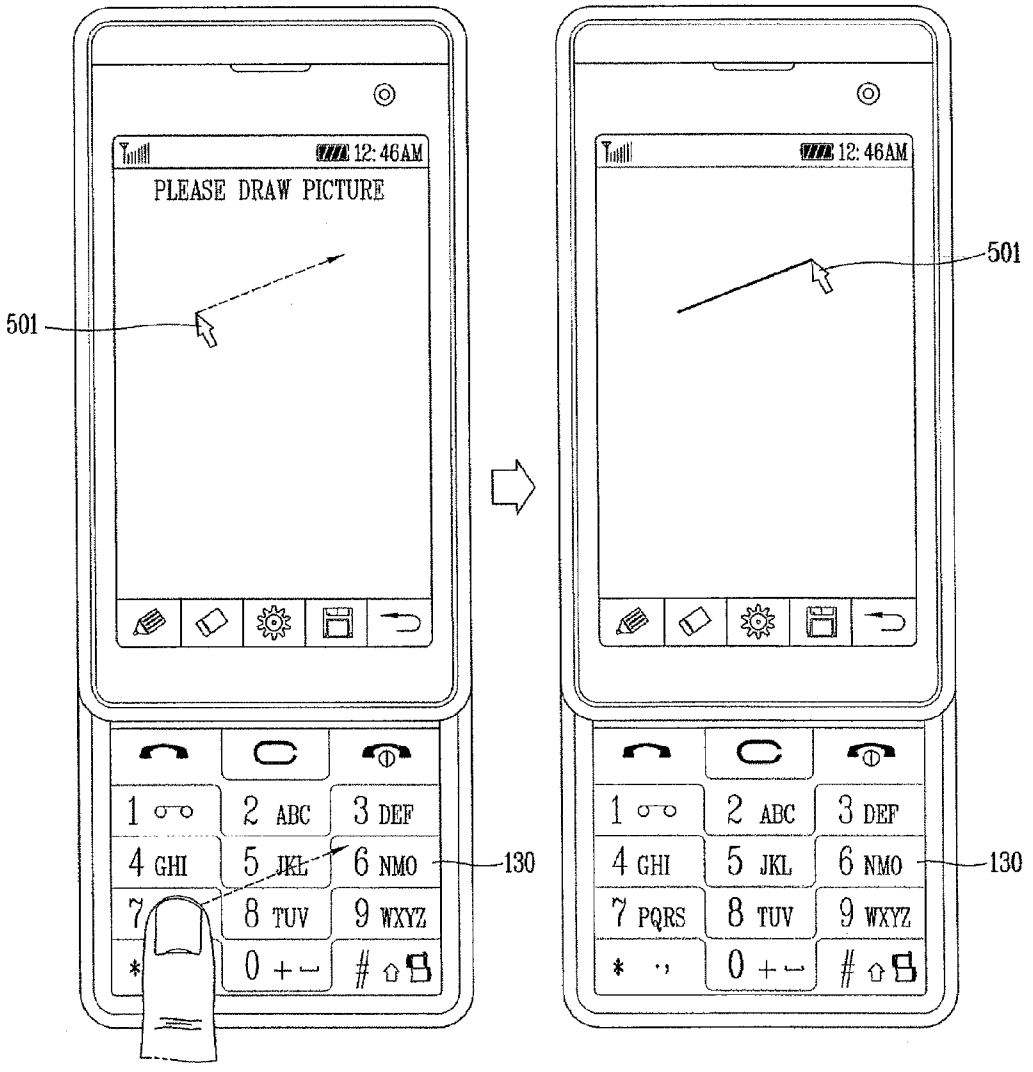

12:46AM
PLEASE DRAW PICTURE
501
1
2 ABC
3 DEF
4 GHI
5 JKL
6 NMO
7 PQRS
8 TUV
9 WXYZ
0
130
501
130

FIG. 9B

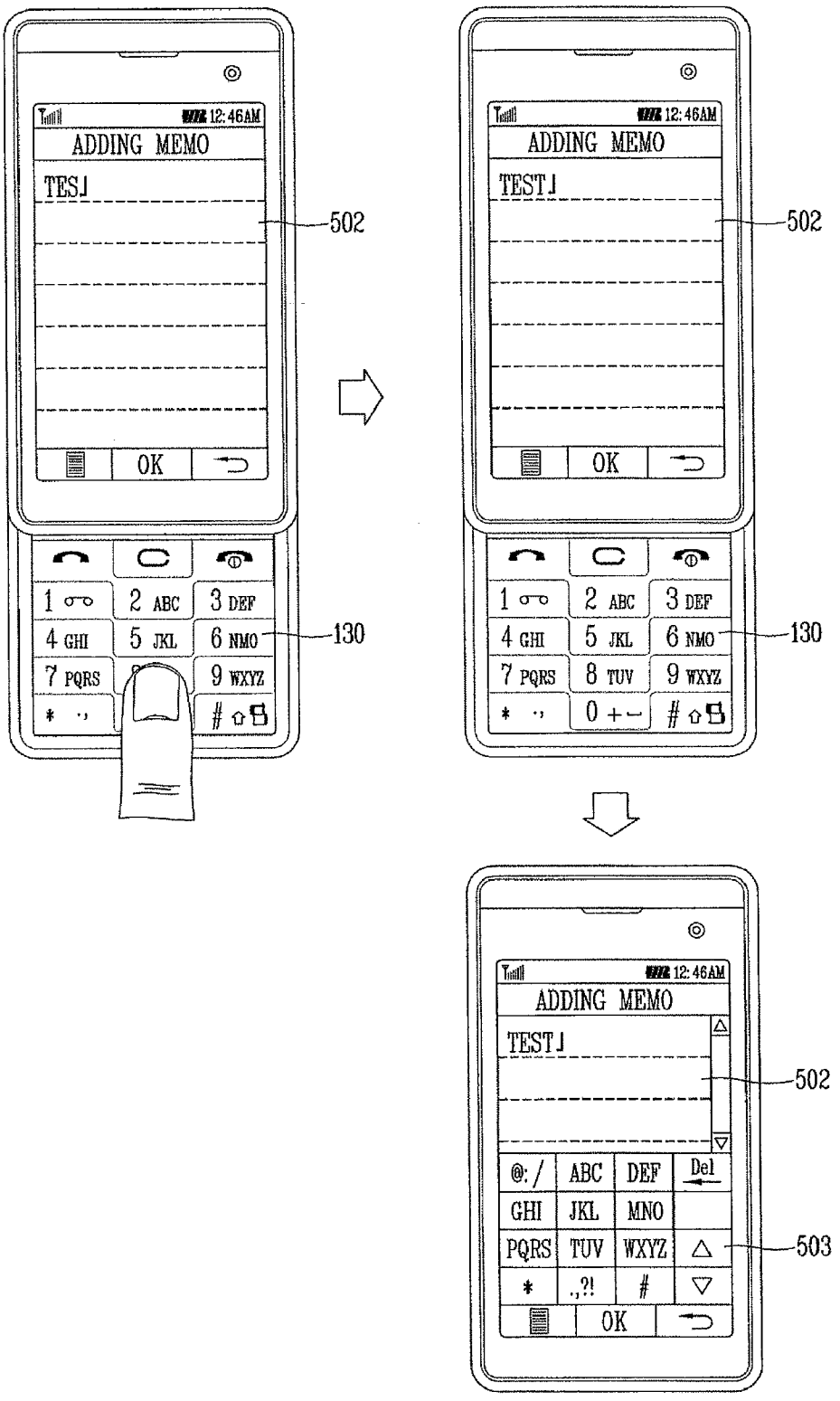

12:46AM
ADDING MEMO
TESJ
502
OK
1
2 ABC
3 DEF
4 GHI
5 JKL
6 NMO
130
7 PQRS
9 WXYZ
*
#
12:46AM
ADDING MEMO
TESTJ
502
OK
1
2 ABC
3 DEF
4 GHI
5 JKL
6 NMO
130
7 PQRS
8 TUV
9 WXYZ
*
0 +
#
12:46AM
ADDING MEMO
TESTJ
502
@:/
ABC
DEF
Del
GHI
JKL
MNO
PQRS
TUV
WXYZ
503
*
.,?!
#
OK

FIG. 10

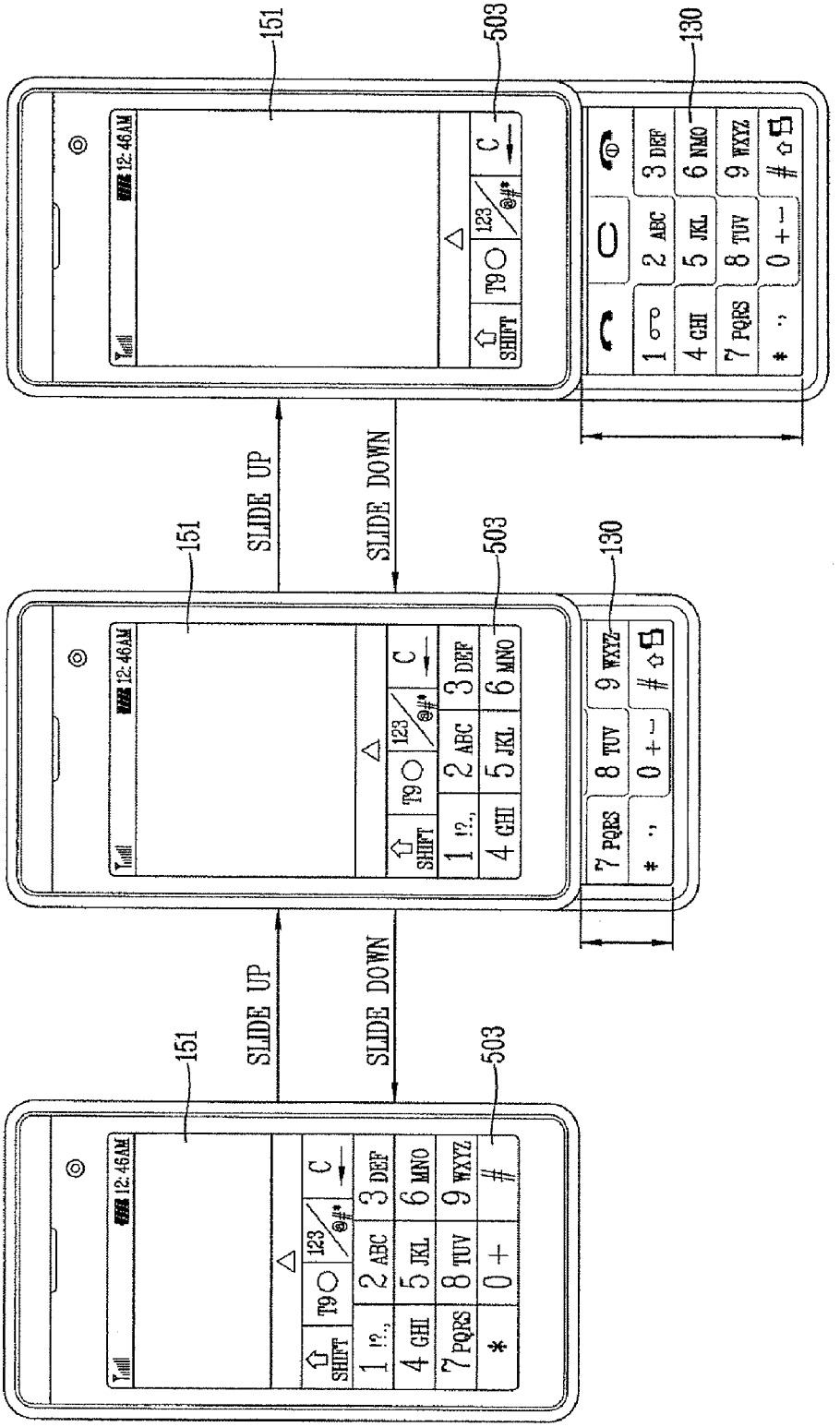

151
503
130
SLIDE UP
SLIDE DOWN
151
503
130
SLIDE UP
SLIDE DOWN
151
503

FIG. 11

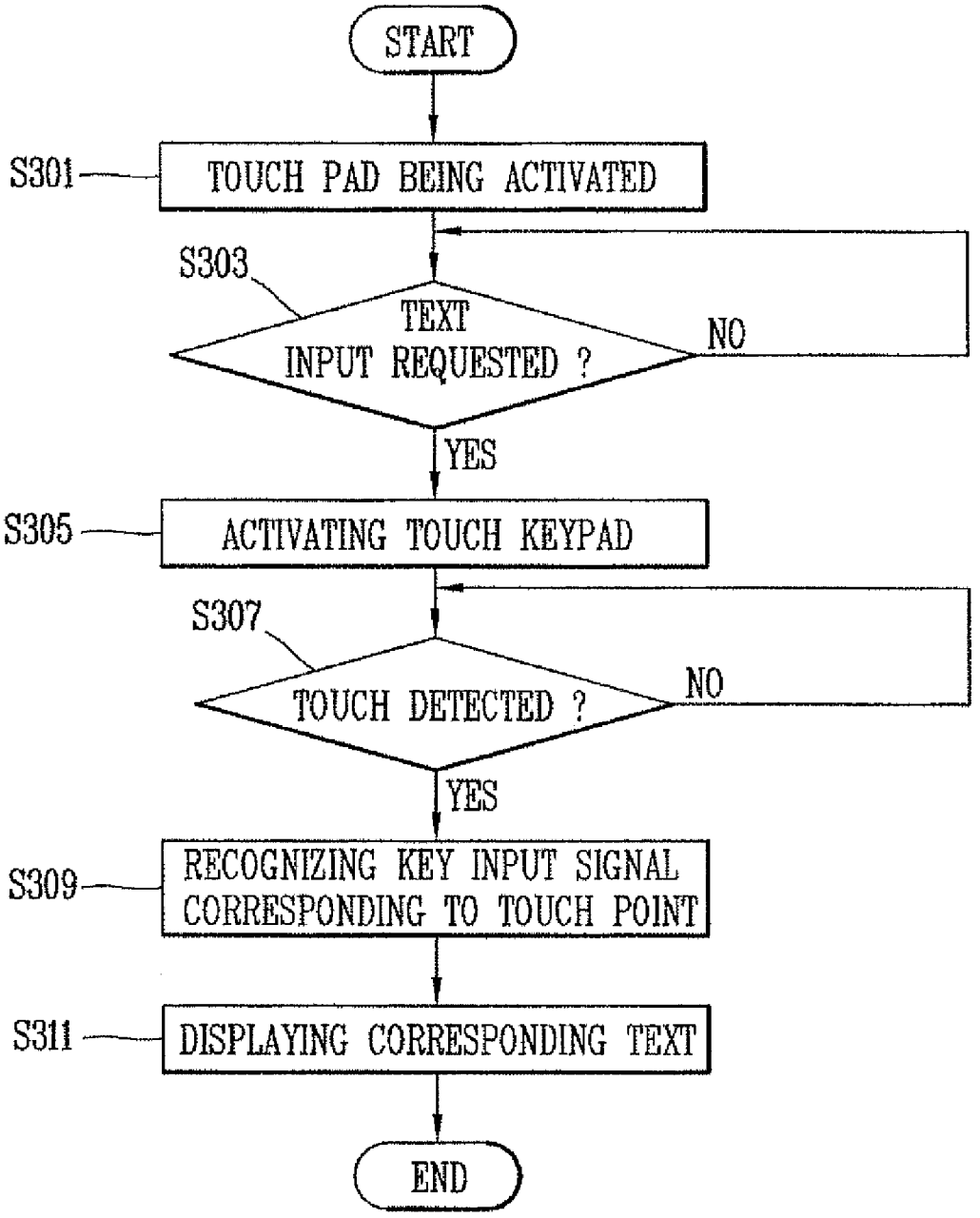

START
S301
TOUCH PAD BEING ACTIVATED
S303
TEXT INPUT REQUESTED ?
NO
YES
S305
ACTIVATING TOUCH KEYPAD
S307
TOUCH DETECTED ?
NO
YES
S309
RECOGNIZING KEY INPUT SIGNAL CORRESPONDING TO TOUCH POINT
S311
DISPLAYING CORRESPONDING TEXT
END

FIG. 12

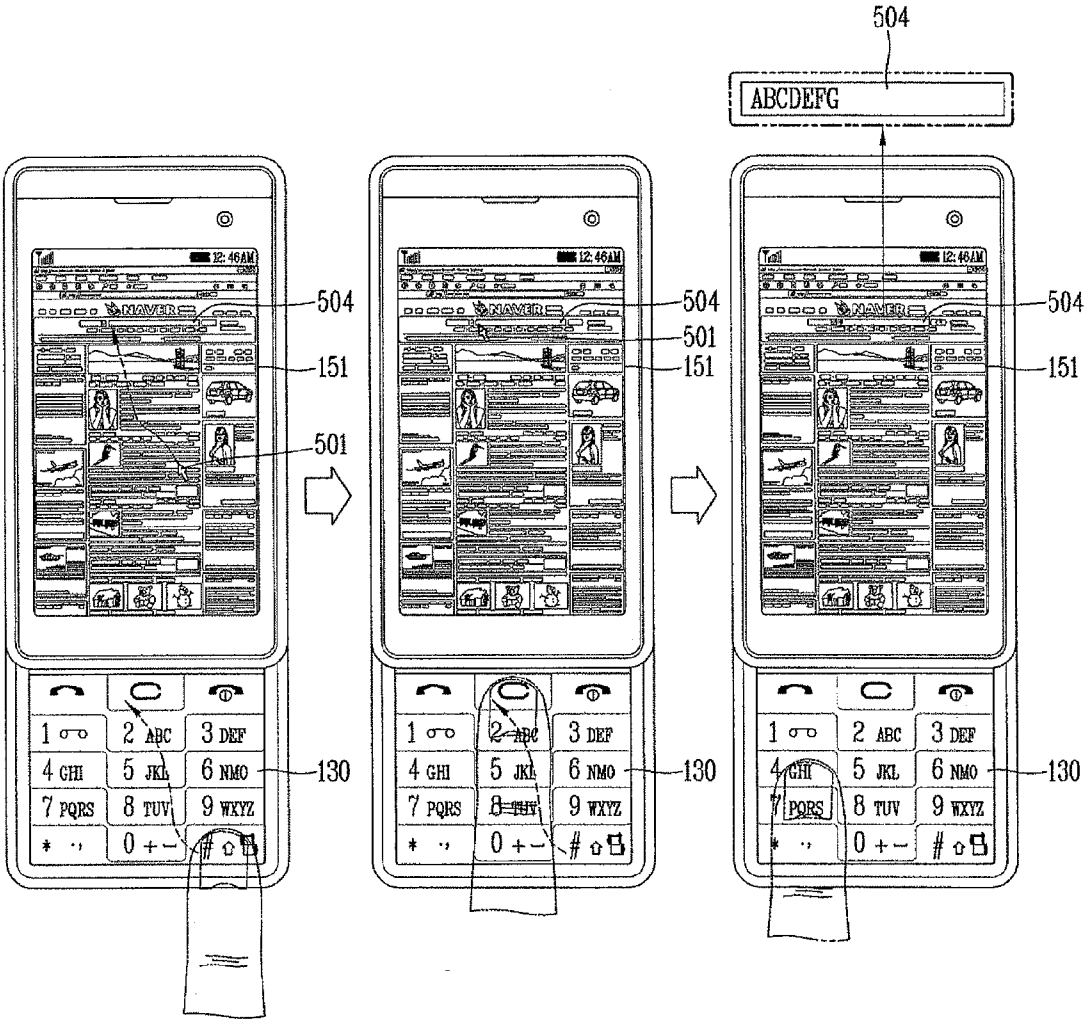
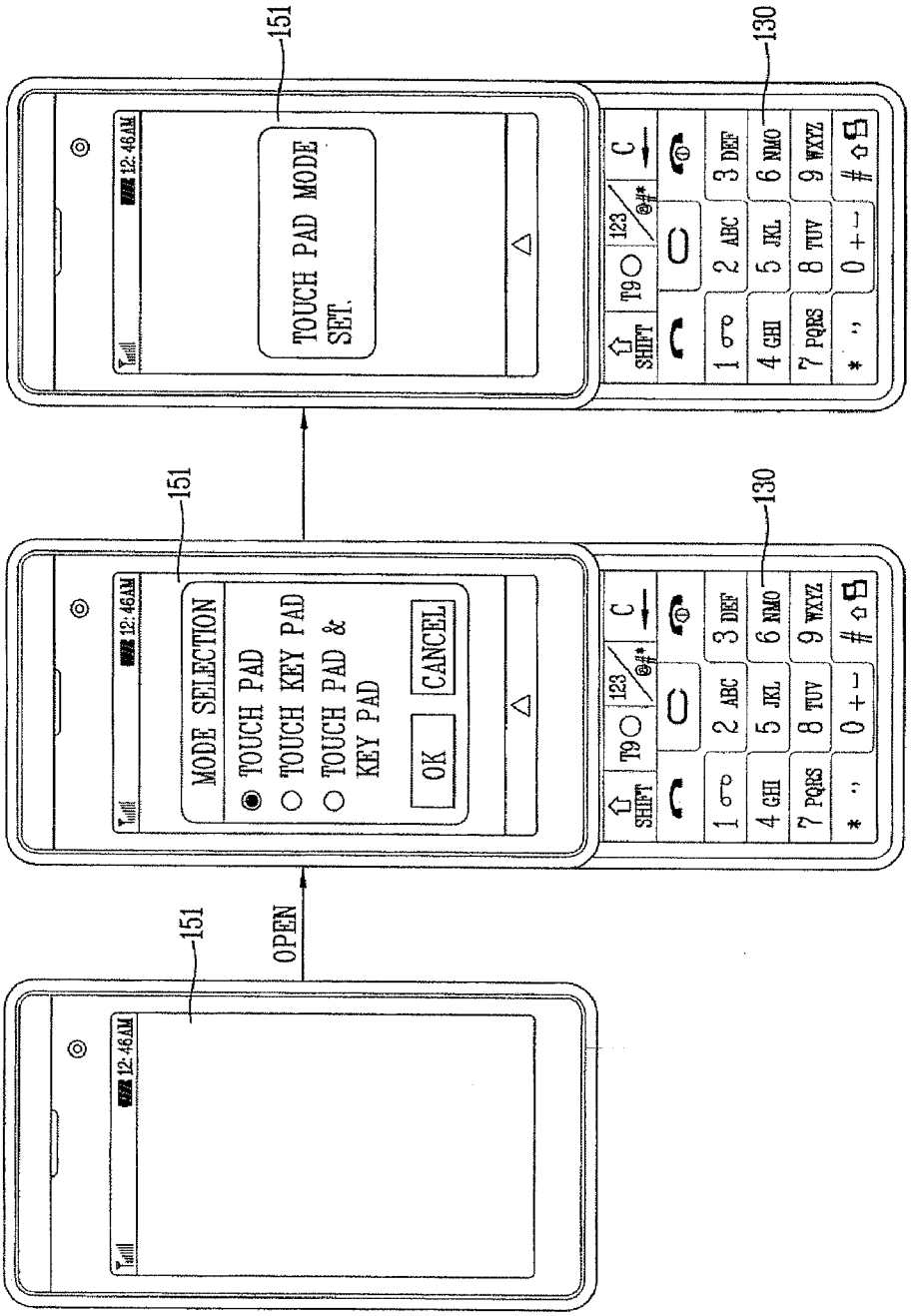


FIG. 13


151
130
TOUCH PAD MODE SET.
MODE SELECTION
TOUCH PAD
TOUCH KEY PAD
TOUCH PAD & KEY PAD
OK
CANCEL
OPEN
12:46AM
SHIFT
T9
123
C

MOBILE TERMINAL HAVING TOUCH SENSOR-EQUIPPED INPUT DEVICE AND CONTROL METHOD THEREOF

CROSS REFERENCE TO A RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] The present application claims priority to Korean Application No. 10-2008-0101743 filed in Korea on Oct. 16, 2008, the entire contents of which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates to a mobile terminal having a touch sensor-equipped input device and its control method.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] A mobile terminal such as a personal computer, a notebook computer, a mobile phone, and the like, may be configured to perform diverse functions. Examples of such functions include data and voice communications, capturing images and video via a camera, recording audio, playing music files via a speaker system, and displaying images and video on a display. Some terminals include additional functionality which supports game playing, while other terminals are configured as multimedia players. More recently, mobile terminals have been configured to receive broadcast and multicast signals which permit viewing of content such as videos and television programs.

[0006] In general, the terminals may be divided into a mobile terminal and stationary terminal according to whether or not terminals are movable. In addition, mobile terminals may be divided into a handheld terminal and a vehicle mount terminal according to whether or not users can directly carry it around.

[0007] Efforts are ongoing to support and increase the functionality of mobile terminals. Such efforts include software and hardware improvements, as well as changes and improvements in the structural components which form the mobile terminal.

[0008] In general, the mobile terminal includes a keypad for generating input data according to a user manipulation, direction keys for moving a cursor, and function keys for executing particular functions. Recently, efforts are ongoing to provide input devices of various designs and input methods to mobile terminals having a restricted space for user convenience.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] Accordingly, one object of the present invention is to address the above-noted and other problems.

[0010] Another object of the present invention is to provide a mobile terminal having an input device with a touch sensor operating as a touch pad and/or a touch keypad, and its control method.

[0011] Still another object of the present invention is to provide a mobile terminal having an input device with a touch sensor controlling an operation mode of the input device according to an application program, and its control method.

[0012] To achieve these and other advantages and in accordance with the purpose of the present invention, as embodied and broadly described herein, the present invention provides in one aspect a mobile terminal including: a user input unit in which a keypad-printed layer and a touch sensor overlap with each other; and a controller that controls an operation mode of the user input unit in a touch pad and/or a touch keypad mode according to whether or not a cursor is in use.

[0013] To achieve these and other advantages and in accordance with the purpose of the present invention, as embodied and broadly described herein, the present invention provides in another aspect a method for controlling an input device of a mobile terminal, including: checking whether a cursor is in use when a certain function is executed; and activating an operation mode of the input device as a touch pad and/or touch keypad mode according to whether or not he cursor is in use.

[0014] Further scope of applicability of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description given hereinafter. However, it should be understood that the detailed description and specific examples, while indicating preferred embodiments of the invention, are given by illustration only, since various changes and modifications within the spirit and scope of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this detailed description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] The present invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description given hereinbelow and the accompanying drawings, which are given by illustration only, and thus are not limitative of the present invention, and wherein:

[0016] FIG. **1** is a schematic block diagram of a mobile terminal implementing an embodiment of the present invention;

[0017] FIG. **2** is a front perspective view of a mobile terminal implementing an embodiment of the present invention;

[0018] FIG. **3** is a rear perspective view of a mobile terminal implementing an embodiment of the present invention;

[0019] FIG. **4** is a block diagram of a wireless communication system with which the mobile terminal according to an embodiment of the present invention is operable;

[0020] FIG. **5** is a front perspective view of the mobile terminal having a touch sensor-equipped input device according to an embodiment of the present invention;

[0021] FIG. **6** is a flow chart illustrating a method for controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to one embodiment of the present invention;

[0022] FIG. **7** is an overview of display screens illustrating controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to the embodiment of FIG. **6**;

[0023] FIG. **8** is a flow chart illustrating a method for controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to another embodiment of the present invention;

[0024] FIGS. **9***a* and **9***b* are overviews of display screens illustrating controlling of the input device of the mobile terminal according to the embodiment of FIG. **8**;

[0025] FIG. **10** is an overview of display screens illustrating a method for controlling the input device according to a slid state of the mobile terminal according to an embodiment of the present invention;

[0026] FIG. **11** is a flow chart illustrating a method for controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to still another embodiment of the present invention;

[0027] FIG. **12** is an overview of display screens illustrating an example of controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to the embodiment of FIG. **11**; and

[0028] FIG. **13** illustrates a method for controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0029] The mobile terminal according to exemplary embodiments of the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

[0030] The mobile terminal according to exemplary embodiments of the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings. In the following description, usage of suffixes such as 'module', 'part' or 'unit' used for referring to elements is given merely to facilitate explanation of the present invention, without having any significant meaning by itself.

[0031] Mobile terminals may be implemented in various forms. For example, the terminal described in the present invention may include mobile terminals such as mobile phones, smart phones, notebook computers, digital broadcast receivers, PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants), PMPs (Portable Multimedia Player), navigation devices, and the like, and fixed terminals such as digital TVs, desk top computers and the like. Hereinafter, it is assumed that the terminal is a mobile terminal. However, it would be understood by a person in the art that the configuration according to the embodiments of the present invention can be also applicable to the fixed types of terminals, except for any elements especially configured for a mobile purpose.

[0032] FIG. **1** is a block diagram of a mobile terminal according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0033] The mobile terminal **100** may include a wireless communication unit **110**, an A/V (Audio/Video) input unit **120**, a user input unit **130**, a sensing unit **140**, an output unit **150**, a memory **160**, an interface unit **170**, a controller **180**, and a power supply unit **190**, etc. FIG. **1** shows the mobile terminal as having various components, but it should be understood that implementing all of the illustrated components is not a requirement. Greater or fewer components may alternatively be implemented.

[0034] The elements of the mobile terminal will be described in detail as follows.

[0035] The wireless communication unit **110** typically includes one or more components allowing radio communication between the mobile terminal **100** and a wireless communication system or a network in which the mobile terminal is located. For example, the wireless communication unit may include at least one of a broadcast receiving module **111**, a mobile communication module **112**, a wireless Internet module **113**, a short-range communication module **114**, and a location information module **115**.

[0036] The broadcast receiving module **111** receives broadcast signals and/or broadcast associated information from an external broadcast management server (or other network entity) via a broadcast channel. The broadcast channel may include a satellite channel and/or a terrestrial channel. The broadcast management server may be a server that generates and transmits a broadcast signal and/or broadcast associated information or a server that receives a previously generated broadcast signal and/or broadcast associated information and transmits the same to a terminal. The broadcast signal may include a TV broadcast signal, a radio broadcast signal, a data broadcast signal, and the like. Also, the broadcast signal may further include a broadcast signal combined with a TV or radio broadcast signal.

[0037] The broadcast associated information may also be provided via a mobile communication network and, in this case, the broadcast associated information may be received by the mobile communication module **112**.

[0038] The broadcast signal may exist in various forms. For example, it may exist in the form of an electronic program guide (EPG) of digital multimedia broadcasting (DMB), electronic service guide (ESG) of digital video broadcast-handheld (DVB-H), and the like.

[0039] The broadcast receiving module **111** may be configured to receive signals broadcast by using various types of broadcast systems. In particular, the broadcast receiving module **111** may receive a digital broadcast by using a digital broadcast system such as multimedia broadcasting-terrestrial (DMB-T), digital multimedia broadcasting-satellite (DMB-S), digital video broadcast-handheld (DVB-H), the data broadcasting system known as media forward link only (MediaFLO®), integrated services digital broadcast-terrestrial (ISDB-T), etc. The broadcast receiving module **111** may be configured to be suitable for every broadcast system that provides a broadcast signal as well as the above-mentioned digital broadcast systems.

[0040] Broadcast signals and/or broadcast-associated information received via the broadcast receiving module **111** may be stored in the memory **160** (or anther type of storage medium).

[0041] The mobile communication module **112** transmits and/or receives radio signals to and/or from at least one of a base station (e.g., access point, Node B, etc.), an external terminal (e.g., other user devices) and a server (or other network entities). Such radio signals may include a voice call signal, a video call signal or various types of data according to text and/or multimedia message transmission and/or reception.

[0042] The wireless Internet module **113** supports wireless Internet access for the mobile terminal. This module may be internally or externally coupled to the terminal. The wireless Internet access technique implemented may include a WLAN (Wireless LAN) (Wi-Fi), Wibro (Wireless broadband), Wimax (World Interoperability for Microwave Access), HSDPA (High Speed Downlink Packet Access), or the like.

[0043] The short-range communication module **114** is a module for supporting short range communications. Some examples of short-range communication technology include Bluetooth™, Radio Frequency IDentification (RFID), Infrared Data Association (IrDA), Ultra-WideBand (UWB), ZigBee™, and the like.

[0044] The location information module **115** is a module for checking or acquiring a location (or position) of the mobile terminal. A typical example of the location information module is a GPS (Global Positioning System). According to the current technology, the GPS module **115** calculates distance information from three or more satellites and accurate time information and applies trigonometry to the calculated information to thereby accurately calculate three-dimensional current location information according to latitude, longitude, and altitude. Currently, a method for calculating location and time information by using three satellites and correcting an error of the calculated location and time information by using another one satellite. In addition, the GPS module **115** can calculate speed information by continuously calculating the current location in real time.

[0045] The ANV input unit **120** is configured to receive an audio or video signal. The ANV input unit **120** may include a

camera **121** (or other image capture device) and a microphone **122** (or other sound pick-up device). The camera **121** processes image data of still pictures or video obtained by an image capture device in a video capturing mode or an image capturing mode. The processed image frames may be displayed on a display unit **151** (or other visual output device).

[0046] The image frames processed by the camera **121** may be stored in the memory **160** (or other storage medium) or transmitted via the wireless communication unit **110**. Two or more cameras **121** may be provided according to the configuration of the mobile terminal.

[0047] The microphone **122** may receive sounds (audible data) via a microphone (or the like) in a phone call mode, a recording mode, a voice recognition mode, and the like, and can process such sounds into audio data. The processed audio (voice) data may be converted for output into a format transmittable to a mobile communication base station (or other network entity) via the mobile communication module **112** in case of the phone call mode. The microphone **122** may implement various types of noise canceling (or suppression) algorithms to cancel (or suppress) noise or interference generated in the course of receiving and transmitting audio signals.

[0048] The user input unit **130** (or other user input device) may generate key input data from commands entered by a user to control various operations of the mobile terminal. The user input unit **130** allows the user to enter various types of information, and may include a keypad, a dome switch, a touch pad (e.g., a touch sensitive member that detects changes in resistance, pressure, capacitance, etc. due to being contacted) a jog wheel, a jog switch, and the like. In particular, when the touch pad is overlaid on the display unit **151** in a layered manner, it may form a touch screen.

[0049] The sensing unit **140** (or other detection means) detects a current status (or state) of the mobile terminal **100** such as an opened or closed state of the mobile terminal **100**, a location of the mobile terminal **100**, the presence or absence of user contact with the mobile terminal **100** (i.e., touch inputs), the orientation of the mobile terminal **100**, an acceleration or deceleration movement and direction of the mobile terminal **100**, etc., and generates commands or signals for controlling the operation of the mobile terminal **100**. For example, when the mobile terminal **100** is implemented as a slide type mobile phone, the sensing unit **140** may sense whether the slide phone is opened or closed. In addition, the sensing unit **140** can detect whether or not the power supply unit **190** supplies power or whether or not the interface unit **170** is coupled with an external device.

[0050] The interface unit **170** (or other connection means) serves as an interface by which at least one external device may be connected with the mobile terminal **100**. For example, the external devices may include wired or wireless headset ports, an external power supply (or battery charger) ports, wired or wireless data ports, memory card ports, ports for connecting a device having an identification module, audio input/output (I/O) ports, video I/O ports, earphone ports, or the like.

[0051] The identification module may be a memory chip (or other element with memory or storage capabilities) that stores various information for authenticating user's authority for using the mobile terminal **100** and may include a user identity module (UIM), a subscriber identity module (SIM) a universal subscriber identity module (USIM), and the like. In addition, the device having the identification module (referred to as the 'identifying device', hereinafter) may take the form of a smart card. Accordingly, the identifying device may be connected with the terminal **100** via a port or other connection means. The interface unit **170** may be used to receive inputs (e.g., data, information, power, etc.) from an external device and transfer the received inputs to one or more elements within the mobile terminal **100** or may be used to transfer data between the mobile terminal and an external device.

[0052] In addition, when the mobile terminal **100** is connected with an external cradle, the interface unit **170** may serve as a conduit to allow power from the cradle to be supplied therethrough to the mobile terminal **100** or may serve as a conduit to allow various command signals inputted from the cradle to be transferred to the mobile terminal therethrough. Various command signals or power inputted from the cradle may be operated as a signal for recognizing that the mobile terminal is accurately mounted on the cradle.

[0053] The output unit **150** is configured to provide outputs in a visual, audible, and/or tactile manner (e.g., audio signal, video signal, alarm signal, vibration signal, etc.). The output unit **150** may include the display unit **151**, an audio output module **152**, an alarm unit **153**, and the like.

[0054] The display unit **151** may display information processed in the mobile terminal **100**. For example, when the mobile terminal **100** is in a phone call mode, the display unit **151** may display a User Interface (UI) or a Graphic User Interface (GUI) associated with a call or other communication (such as text messaging, multimedia file downloading, etc.). When the mobile terminal **100** is in a video call mode or image capturing mode, the display unit **151** may display a captured image and/or received image, a UI or GUI that shows videos or images and functions related thereto, and the like.

[0055] Meanwhile, when the display unit **151** and the touch pad are overlaid in a layered manner to form a touch screen, the display unit **151** may function as both an input device and an output device. The display unit **151** may include at least one of a Liquid Crystal Display (LCD), a Thin Film Transistor-LCD (TFT-LCD), an Organic Light Emitting Diode (OLED) display, a flexible display, a three-dimensional (3D) display, or the like. Some of them may be configured to be transparent to allow viewing of the exterior, which may be called transparent displays. Atypical transparent display may be, for example, a TOLED (Transparent Organic Light Emitting Diode) display, or the like. The mobile terminal **100** may include two or more display units (or other display means) according to its particular desired embodiment. For example, the mobile terminal may include both an external display unit (not shown) and an internal display unit (not shown). The touch screen may be configured to detect even a touch input pressure as well as a touch input position and a touch input area.

[0056] A proximity sensor **141** may be disposed within or near the touch screen. The proximity sensor **141** is a sensor for detecting the presence or absence of an object relative to a certain detection surface or an object that exists nearby by using the force of electromagnetism or infrared rays without a physical contact. Thus, the proximity sensor **141** has a considerably longer life span compared with a contact type sensor, and it can be utilized for various purposes.

[0057] Examples of the proximity sensor **141** may include a transmission type photo sensor, a direct reflection type photo sensor, a mirror-reflection type photo sensor, an RF

oscillation type proximity sensor, a capacitance type proximity sensor, a magnetic proximity sensor, an infrared proximity sensor, and the like.

[0058] The operational principle of the RF oscillation type proximity sensor, among the implementable proximity sensors, will be described as an example. When an object approaches the sensor detection surface in a state that an RF (Radio Frequency) of a static wave is oscillated by an oscillation circuit, the oscillation amplitude of the oscillation circuit is attenuated or stopped, and such a change is converted into an electrical signal to detect the presence or absence of an object. Thus, even if any material other than metallic one is positioned between the RF oscillation proximity sensor and the object, a proximity switch can detect the object intended to be detected without an interference by the object.

[0059] Without the proximity sensor **141**, if the touch screen is an electrostatic type, the approach of a pointer (stylus) can be detected based on a change in a field according to the approach of the pointer.

[0060] Thus, although the pointer is not actually brought into contact with the touch screen but merely positioned close to the touch screen, the position of the pointer and the distance between the pointer and the touch screen can be detected. In the following description, for the sake of brevity, recognition of the pointer positioned to be close to the touch screen will be called a 'proximity touch', while recognition of actual contacting of the pointer on the touch screen will be called a 'contact touch'. In this case, when the pointer is in the state of the proximity touch, it means that the pointer is positioned to correspond vertically to the touch screen.

[0061] By employing the proximity sensor **141**, a proximity touch and a proximity touch pattern (e.g., a proximity touch distance, a proximity touch speed, a proximity touch time, a proximity touch position, a proximity touch movement state, or the like) can be detected, and information corresponding to the detected proximity touch operation and the proximity touch pattern can be outputted to the touch screen.

[0062] The audio output module **152** may convert and output as sound audio data received from the wireless communication unit **110** or stored in the memory **160** in a call signal reception mode, a call mode, a record mode, a voice recognition mode, a broadcast reception mode, and the like. Also, the audio output module **152** may provide audible outputs related to a particular function performed by the mobile terminal **100** (e.g., a call signal reception sound, a message reception sound, etc.). The audio output module **152** may include a speaker, a buzzer, or other sound generating device.

[0063] The alarm unit **153** (or other type of user notification means) may provide outputs to inform about the occurrence of an event of the mobile terminal **100**. Typical events may include call reception, message reception, key signal inputs, a touch input etc. In addition to audio or video outputs, the alarm unit **153** may provide outputs in a different manner to inform about the occurrence of an event. For example, the alarm unit **153** may provide an output in the form of vibrations (or other tactile or sensible outputs). When a call, a message, or some other incoming communication is received, the alarm unit **153** may provide tactile outputs (i.e., vibrations) to inform the user thereof. By providing such tactile outputs, the user can recognize the occurrence of various events even if his mobile phone is in the user's pocket. Outputs informing about the occurrence of an event may be also provided via the display unit **151** or the audio output module **152**.

[0064] The memory **160** (or other storage means) may store software programs or the like used for the processing and controlling operations performed by the controller **180**, or may temporarily store data (e.g., a phonebook, messages, still images, video, etc.) that have been outputted or which are to be outputted.

[0065] The memory **160** may include at least one type of storage medium including a Flash memory, a hard disk, a multimedia card, a card-type memory (e.g., SD or DX memory, etc), a Random Access Memory (RAM), a Static Random Access Memory (SRAM), a Read-Only Memory (ROM), an Electrically Erasable Programmable Read-Only Memory (EEPROM), a Programmable Read-Only Memory (PROM), a magnetic memory, a magnetic disk, an optical disk, and the like. Also, the mobile terminal **100** may cooperate with a network storage device that performs the storage function of the memory **160** over a network connection.

[0066] The controller **180** (such as a microprocessor or the like) typically controls the general operations of the mobile terminal. For example, the controller **180** performs controlling and processing associated with voice calls, data communications, video calls, and the like. In addition, the controller **180** may include a multimedia module **181** for reproducing (or playing back) multimedia data. The multimedia module **181** may be configured within the controller **180** or may be configured to be separate from the controller **180**.

[0067] The controller **180** may perform a pattern recognition processing to recognize a handwriting input or a picture drawing input performed on the touch screen as characters or images.

[0068] The power supply unit **190** receives external power (via a power cable connection) or internal power (via a battery of the mobile terminal) and supplies appropriate power required for operating respective elements and components under the control of the controller **180**.

[0069] Various embodiments as described herein may be implemented in a computer-readable medium using, for example, computer software, hardware, or any combination thereof.

[0070] For hardware implementation, the embodiments described herein may be implemented by using at least one of application specific integrated circuits (ASICs), digital signal processors (DSPs), digital signal processing devices (DSPDs), programmable logic devices (PLDs), field programmable gate arrays (FPGAs), processors, controllers, micro-controllers, microprocessors, electronic units designed to perform the functions described herein. In some cases, such embodiments may be implemented in the controller **180**.

[0071] For software implementation, the embodiments such as procedures or functions may be implemented together with separate software modules that allow performing of at least one function or operation. Software codes can be implemented by a software application (or program) written in any suitable programming language. The software codes may be stored in the memory **160** and executed by the controller **180**.

[0072] So far, the mobile terminal has been described from the perspective of its functions. Hereinafter, external elements of the mobile terminal will be described from the perspective of their functions with reference to FIGS. **2** and **3**.

[0073] The mobile terminal may be implemented in a variety of different configurations. Examples of such configurations include folder-type, bar-type, swing-type, a slide type, as well as various other configurations. The following description will primarily relate to a slide-type mobile terminal. However, such description can equally apply to other types of mobile terminals.

[0074] FIG. **2** is a front perspective view of the mobile terminal according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0075] The mobile terminal **100** according to the present invention includes a first body **200**, and a second body **205** that can be slidably moved along at least one direction with respect to the first body **200**. In case of a folder type mobile phone, the mobile terminal **100** may include a first body and a second body having one side that can be folded or unfolded with respect to the first body.

[0076] A state in which the first body is disposed to overlap with the second body **205** may be called a closed configuration, and as shown in FIG. **2**, a state in which at least a portion of the second body **205** is exposed may be called an open configuration.

[0077] Although not shown, the mobile terminal according to the present invention may be the folder type mobile terminal including the first body and the second body having one side to be folded or unfolded with respect to the first body. Here, a state in which the second body is folded may be called a closed configuration, and a state in which the second body is unfolded may be called an open configuration.

[0078] In addition, although not shown, the mobile terminal according to the present invention may be a swing type mobile terminal including a first body and a second body configured to be swingable with respect to the first body. Here, a state in which the first body is disposed to overlap with the second body may be called a closed configuration, and a state in which the second body is swung to expose a portion of the first body may be called an open configuration.

[0079] The folder type mobile terminal and the swing type mobile terminal can be easily know by the person in the art without any explanation, so its detailed description will be omitted.

[0080] In the closed configuration, the mobile terminal mainly operates in a standby (or idle) mode, and the standby mode may be released upon user manipulation. The mobile terminal operates mainly in the calling mode or the like in the open configuration, and it can be changed to the standby mode with the lapse of time or upon user manipulation.

[0081] The case (or casing, housing, cover, etc.) constituting the external appearance of the first body **200** may include a first front case **220** and a first rear case **225**. Various electronic components are installed in the space between the first front case **220** and the first rear case **225**. One or more intermediate cases may be additionally disposed between the first front case **220** and the first rear case **225**.

[0082] The cases may be formed by injection-molding a synthetic resin or may be made of a metallic material such as stainless steel (STS) or titanium (Ti), etc.

[0083] The display unit **151**, the audio output module **152**, the camera **121** or the first user input unit **210** may be located at the first body **200**, specifically, on the first front case **220** of the first body **200**.

[0084] The display unit **151** has been described in relation to FIG. **1**, so its detailed description will be omitted for the sake of brevity.

[0085] The audio output unit **152** may be implemented in the form of a speaker or other sound producing device.

[0086] The camera **121** may be implemented to be suitable for capturing images or video with respect to the user and other objects.

[0087] Like the first body **200**, the case constituting the external appearance of the second body **205** may include a second front case **230** and a second rear case **235**.

[0088] A second user input unit **215** may be disposed at the second body, specifically, at a front face of the second body **205**.

[0089] A third user input unit **245**, the microphone **122**, the interface unit **170** may be disposed on at least one of the second front case **230** and the second rear case **235**.

[0090] The first to third user input units **210**, **215** and **245** may be generally referred to as a manipulating portion **130**, and various methods and techniques can be employed for the manipulation unit so long as they can be operated by the user in a tactile manner.

[0091] For example, the user input units **130** can be implemented as dome switches, actuators, or touch pad regions that can receive user commands or information according to the user's touch operations (e.g., pressing, pushing, swiping, drag-and-drop, etc.) or may be implemented in the form of a rotatable control wheel (or disc), keys or buttons, a jog dial, a joystick, or the like.

[0092] In terms of their functions, the first user input unit **210** is used for inputting (entering) commands such as start, end, scroll or the like, and the second user input unit **215** is used for inputting (entering) numbers, characters, symbols, or the like. The first user input unit **210** may include a soft key used by interworking with icons displayed on the display unit **151** and navigation key (largely including four direction keys and a central key) for indicating and checking directions.

[0093] Also, the third user input unit **245** may support the so-called hot key functions that allow more convenient activation of particular functions for the mobile terminal.

[0094] The microphone **122** (or other sound pick-up device) may be appropriately implemented to detect user voice inputs, other sounds, and the like.

[0095] The interface unit **170** may be used as a communication link (or passage, path, etc.) through which the terminal can exchange data or the like with an external device. The interface unit **170** has been described in relation to FIG. **1**, so its detailed description will be omitted.

[0096] The power supply unit **190** for supplying power to the terminal may be located at the second rear case **235**.

[0097] The power supply unit **190** may be, for example, a rechargeable battery that can be detached.

[0098] FIG. **3** is a rear perspective view of the mobile terminal of FIG. **2** according to an exemplary embodiment.

[0099] As shown in FIG. **3**, a camera **121** (or other image pick-up device) may additionally be disposed on a rear surface of the second rear case **235** of the second body **205**. The camera **121** of the second body **205** may have an image capture direction which is substantially opposite to that of the camera **121** of the first body **200** (namely, the two cameras may be implemented to face towards opposing directions, such as front and rear), and may support a different number of pixels (i.e., have a different resolution) than the camera **121** of the first body.

[0100] For example, the camera of the first body **200** may operate with a relatively lower resolution to capture an image (s) of the user's face and immediately transmit such image(s)

to another party in real-time during video call communication or the like in which reverse link bandwidth capabilities may be limited. Also, the camera of the second body **205** may operate with a relatively higher resolution to capture images of general objects with high picture quality, which may not require immediately transmission in real-time, but may be stored for later viewing or use.

[0101] Additional camera related components, such as a flash **250** and a mirror **255**, may be additionally disposed adjacent to the camera **121**. When an image of the subject is captured with the camera **121** of the second body **205**, the flash **250** illuminates the subject. The mirror **255** allows the user to see himself when he wants to capture his own image (i.e., self-image capturing) by using the camera **121** of the second body **205**.

[0102] The second rear case **235** may further include an audio output module **152**. The audio output module **152** of the second body **205** may support stereophonic sound functions in conjunction with the audio output module **152** of the first body **200** and may be also used for sending and receiving calls in a speaker phone mode.

[0103] A broadcast signal receiving antenna **260** may be disposed (externally or internally) at one side or region of the second rear case **235**, in addition to an antenna that is used for mobile communications. The antenna **260** can also be configured to be retractable from the second body **205**.

[0104] One part of a slide module **265** that allows the first body **200** and the second body **205** to slide relative to each other may be disposed on the first rear case **225** of the first body **200**.

[0105] The other part of the slide module **265** may be disposed on the second front case **230** of the second body **205**, which may not be exposed as shown in the drawing,

[0106] The second camera **121** and other components may be disposed on the second body **205**, but such configuration is not meant to be limited.

[0107] For example, one or more of the elements (e.g., **260**, **121** and **250** and **152** etc.), which are disposed on the second rear case **235** may be mounted on the first body **200**, mainly, on the first rear case **225**. In this case, those elements disposed on the first rear case **225** can be protected (or covered) by the second body **205** in the closed configuration. In addition, even if a separate camera is not provided at the second body, the camera module **121** may be configured to rotate (or otherwise be moved) to thus allow image capturing in various directions.

[0108] The mobile terminal **100** as shown in FIGS. **1** to **3** may be configured to operate with a communication system, which transmits data via frames or packets, such as wired and wireless communication systems, as well as satellite-based communication systems.

[0109] Such communication systems in which the mobile terminal according to the present invention can operate will now be described with reference to FIG. **4**.

[0110] Such communication systems may use different air interfaces and/or physical layers. For example, air interfaces utilized by the communication systems include example, frequency division multiple access (FDMA), time division multiple access (TDMA), code division multiple access (CDMA), and universal mobile telecommunications system (UMTS) (in particular, long term evolution (LTE)), global system for mobile communications (GSM), and the like. As a non-limiting example, the description hereafter relates to a CDMA communication system, but such teachings apply equally to other types of systems.

[0111] Referring to FIG. **4**, a CDMA wireless communication system may include a plurality of mobile terminals **100**, a plurality of base stations (BSs) **270**, base station controllers (BSCs) **275**, and a mobile switching center (MSC) **280**. The MSC **280** is configured to interface with a public switch telephone network (PSTN) **290**. The MSC **280** is also configured to interface with the BSCs **275**, which may be coupled to the base stations **270** via backhaul lines. The backhaul lines may be configured in accordance with any of several known interfaces including, for example, E1/T1, ATM, IP, PPP, Frame Relay, HDSL, ADSL, or xDSL. It is to be understood that the system as shown in FIG. **4** may include a plurality of BSCs **275**.

[0112] Each BS **270** may serve one or more sectors (or regions), each sector covered by an omni-directional antenna or an antenna pointed in a particular direction radially away from the BS **270**. Alternatively, each sector may be covered by two or more antennas for diversity reception. Each BS **270** may be configured to support a plurality of frequency assignments, and each frequency assignment has a particular spectrum (e.g., 1.25 MHz, 5 MHz, etc).

[0113] The intersection of a sector and frequency assignment may be referred to as a CDMA channel. The BS **270** may also be referred to as base station transceiver subsystems (BTSs) or other equivalent terms. In such case, the term "base station" may be used to collectively refer to a single BSC **275** and at least one BS **270**. The base station may also be referred to as a "cell site". Alternatively, individual sectors of a particular BS **270** may be referred to as a plurality of cell sites.

[0114] As shown in FIG. **4**, a broadcasting transmitter (BT) **295** transmits a broadcast signal to the mobile terminals **100** operating within the system. The broadcast receiving module **111** as shown in FIG. **1** is provided at the terminal **100** to receive broadcast signals transmitted by the BT **295**.

[0115] In FIG. **4**, several global positioning systems (GPS) satellites **300** are shown. The satellites **300** help locate at least one of a plurality of terminals **100**.

[0116] In FIG. **4**, several satellites **300** are depicted, but it is understood that useful positioning information may be obtained with any number of satellites. The GPS module **115** as shown in FIG. **1** is typically configured to cooperate with the satellites **300** to obtain desired positioning information.

[0117] Instead of or in addition to GPS tracking techniques, other technologies that may track the location of the mobile terminals may be used. In addition, at least one of the GPS satellites **300** may selectively or additionally handle satellite DMB transmissions.

[0118] As one typical operation of the wireless communication system, the BSs **270** receive reverse-link signals from various mobile terminals **100**. The mobile terminals **100** typically engaging in calls, messaging, and other types of communications. Each reverse-link signal received by a particular base station **270** is processed within the particular BS **270**.

[0119] The resulting data is forwarded to an associated BSC **275**. The BSC provides call resource allocation and mobility management functionality including the coordination of soft handoff procedures between BSs **270**. The BSCs **275** also route the received data to the MSC **280**, which provides additional routing services for interfacing with the PSTN **290**. Similarly, the PSTN **290** interfaces with the MSC **280**, the MSC interfaces with the BSCs **275**, and the BSCs

275 in turn control the BSs 270 to transmit forward-link signals to the mobile terminals 100.

[0120] FIG. 5 is a front perspective view of the mobile terminal having a touch sensor-equipped input device according to an embodiment of the present invention. In this embodiment, a slide type mobile terminal 100 is exemplarily described.

[0121] The mobile terminal 100 according to the present invention includes a first body 200 and a second body 205 configured to be slid along at least one direction with respect to the first body 200.

[0122] The display unit 151 and the audio output module 152 may be disposed on the first body 200.

[0123] The display unit 151 and a touch pad may be overlaid in a layered manner to form a touch screen. Accordingly, the display unit 151 may be used also as an input device as well as as a display device.

[0124] The audio output module 152 may be implemented as a speaker that converts an audio signal into an audible frequency and outputs the same.

[0125] The microphone 122 and the user input unit 130 may be disposed on the second body 205.

[0126] As described above, the microphone 122 may be implemented in a suitable form to receive the user's voice, and other sounds.

[0127] The user input unit 130 is a dual input device that can be used as a touch keypad and/or touch pad (mouse pad). The user input unit 130 may include a layer 131 with characters, numbers, special symbols (*, #), and the like, printed on one surface thereof, and a touch sensor 132 disposed to overlap with the layer. For example, the user input unit 130 may include glass with a keypad printed on one surface thereof and a touch sensor contacting with the glass in an overlap manner.

[0128] When the user input unit 130 is activated in a touch keypad mode and a touch of a pointer is detected, the user input unit 130 transmits position information about the touched point to the controller 180 when the touch is released. Here, with the touch keypad mode of the user input unit 130 activated, the controller 180 divides the overall area of the user input unit 130 into a certain number of regions and allocates keys of the keypad to each region.

[0129] The controller 180 recognizes a key input corresponding to the received position information. Namely, the controller 180 recognizes a key input mapped to the touched point and displays a character allocated to the key on a display screen. Here, the character may include Hangul, English, numbers, special symbols, and the like.

[0130] Meanwhile, when the user input unit 103 is activated as a touch pad, the user input unit 130 detects a touch input (gesture recognition) of the pointer and transmits it to the controller 180. Then, the controller 180 controls the cursor displayed on the display unit 151 according to the detected touch input. Namely, the user input unit 130 serves like a mouse that moves a mouse pointer displayed on a monitor of a computer.

[0131] For example, when a drag is detected, the cursor is moved according to the movement of the pointer, and when a simple touch is detected, an object indicated by the cursor is selected. Here, the simple touch may be similar to a clicking operation of the mouse.

[0132] In addition, the user input unit 130 may include a backlight module (not shown). The backlight unit (not shown) may be turned on or off according to an operation mode of the user input unit 130. For example, when the user input unit 130 operates in the touch keypad mode, the backlight module may be turned on to allow the user to recognize positions of the keys constituting the touch keypad. Meanwhile, when the user input unit 130 operates in the touch pad mode, the backlight module is turned off so that the user cannot recognize positions of the printed keys. Namely, the user input unit 130 may be implemented in the same shape as a touch pad of a general notebook computer.

[0133] The sensing unit 140 may detect sliding up/down of the mobile terminal 100. For example, when the first body 200 is slid in one direction to expose a portion of the second body 205, it is detected as a slide-up state, and when the first body 200 overlaps with the front surface of the second body 205, it is detected as a slide-down state.

[0134] When the slide-up state is detected by the sensing unit 140, the controller 180 recognizes an open configuration, and when the slide-down state is detected, the controller 180 recognizes a closed configuration. According to a change in the slide state of the mobile terminal 100, the keypad icons (on-screen editor) displayed on the display unit 151 are changed to a physical keypad of the user input unit 130. Conversely, the physical keypad may be changed to the keypad icons.

[0135] For example, when the slide-up state is changed to the slide-down state, the controller 180 changes the physical keypad to the keypad icons on the display screen. Meanwhile, when the slide-down state is changed to the slide-up state, the controller 180 changes the keypad icons to the physical keypad activation.

[0136] FIG. 6 is a flow chart illustrating a method for controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0137] First, when the operation mode of the mobile terminal 100 is changed to a standby state (idle state), the controller 180 activates the touch pad and the touch keypad as an input mode of the user input unit 130 (S101, S103). Namely, when the mobile terminal 100 is in the open configuration, the controller 180 activates the both modes so that the user input unit 130 can be used as the touch pad or the touch keypad. At this time, when the mobile terminal 100 is turned to the open configuration in a state that a touch input of the display unit 151 is set in a locked state, the controller 180 may release the locked touch input.

[0138] Thereafter, when a touch of the pointer to the user input unit 130 is detected, the controller 180 checks the detected touch input forms (S105, S107). Namely, the controller 180 checks whether the detected touch input is a drag or a simple touch.

[0139] If the detected touch input is a drag, the controller 180 executes a certain function corresponding to the drag input (S109). For example, when the user draws a circle on the user input unit 130 through a dragging operation by using the pointer, the controller 180 executes a text viewer corresponding to the drag input.

[0140] If the detected touch input is not a drag in step S107, the controller 180 recognizes a key input corresponding to the detected touch point and receives a character corresponding to the pertinent key (S111). Namely, when the touch applied to the particular point of the user input unit 130 is released, the controller 130 recognizes it as a key input of the touch keypad.

[0141] FIG. 7 is an overview of display screens illustrating controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to the embodiment of FIG. 6.

[0142] First, when the user slides the first body **200** of the mobile terminal **100**, the controller **180** detects the slidable operation through the sensing unit **140** and checks the corresponding state. If the mobile terminal **100** is in the open configuration, the controller **180** displays a standby screen image on the display unit **151** (a). At this time, when the display unit **151** is set for a locked touch input, the controller **180** released the locked state of the display unit **151** and displays a standby screen image (background image) on the screen of the display unit **151**.

[0143] With the standby screen image displayed, when a touch input is generated on the user input unit **130**, the controller **180** detects the touch via the touch sensor **132**. The detected touch is drag-inputted, the controller executes a function corresponding to the detected drag input. For example, when the user draws a circle in a drag manner on the user input **130**, the controller **180** detects the dragging and executes a corresponding music player (b) (c).

[0144] Meanwhile, if the detected touch is not a drag input, the controller **180** recognizes the detected touch as a key input corresponding to a point of the detected touch when the touch is released. For example, when the user's finger touches a certain region of the user input unit **130**, the controller **180** detects the touch via the sensing unit **140**, and when the touch is released, the controller **180** detects the touch, and when the touch is released, the controller **180** receives information about the touched position from the sensing unit **140** and checks a key corresponding to the position. For example, if data mapped to the touch-detected region is '4', the controller **180** recognizes that number key 4 has been inputted, and displays the number 4 on the display screen (d) (e).

[0145] FIG. **8** is a flow chart illustrating a method for controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to another embodiment of the present invention.

[0146] With reference to FIG. **8**, when a certain function (application program) is selected through menu manipulation by the user, the controller **180** executes the selected function and checks whether or not the executed function uses a cursor (S**201**, S**203**). Here, the use of a cursor may be set by the user according to whether or not each function uses the cursor.

[0147] If the function is set to use the cursor, the controller **180** displays the cursor on the selected function-executed screen, and activates the user input unit **130** in a touch pad mode (S**205**). At this time, the controller **180** deactivates the touch keypad mode of the user input unit **130**.

[0148] Thereafter, when a touch applied to the user input unit **130** is detected, the controller **180** recognizes a touched position, an input type, a movement path, and the like, via the touch sensor **13** of the user input unit **130** (S**207**).

[0149] The controller controls the cursor displayed on the display screen according to the detected touch input (S**209**). Namely, the controller **180** checks whether or not the touch input is a selection command or a cursor movement command. For example, if after the pointer touches a first point and the touch on the first point is released without a position movement, the controller **180** recognizes it as a selection command and selects an object of the cursor-positioned point. Meanwhile, when the pointer is moved from the first point to a second point with the touch maintained (i.e., dragging operation), the controller **180** detects the movement path of the pointer and moves the cursor displayed on the display unit **151** along the detected movement path.

[0150] When the executed function has not been set to use the cursor, the controller activates the user input unit **130** in the touch keypad mode (S**211**). Namely, the controller **180** deactivates the touch pad mode of the user input unit **130**.

[0151] FIGS. **9***a* and **9***b* are overviews of display screens illustrating controlling of the input device of the mobile terminal according to the embodiment of FIG. **8**.

[0152] With reference to FIG. **9***a*, when a picture memo function is selected through menu manipulation by the user, the controller **180** executes the selected picture memo function and displays an executed screen image on the display unit **151**. The controller **180** checks whether the cursor is in use in the picture memo function. If the cursor is in use, the controller **180** displays the cursor **501** on the executed screen. Thereafter, the controller **180** moves the cursor **501** according to dragging inputted via the user input unit **130** and performs drawing along a movement path of the cursor **501**.

[0153] For example, with the picture memo function executed, when a straight line is drawn according to a dragging operation on the user input unit **130**, the controller **180** detects the dragging operation via the sensing unit, moves the cursor **501** according to the dragging operation, and displays a straight line along the movement path of the cursor **501** in the picture memo window displayed on the display unit **151**.

[0154] With reference to FIG. **9***b*, when the memo function is selected through menu manipulation, the controller **140** checks whether the mobile terminal **100** is in an open configuration. If the mobile terminal **100** is in the open configuration, the controller **180** displays only a text input window **502** on the display unit **151**. And the controller **180** checks whether the cursor is to be used, and if the use of the cursor is not necessary, the controller **180** activates the touch keypad mode of the user input unit **130** and deactivates the touch pad mode. With the touch keypad mode of the user input unit **130** activated, when a touch applied to the user input unit **130** is detected, the controller **180** checks a character corresponding to the touch-detected point and display it on the text input window **502**. Namely, the controller **180** recognizes the touch as a key select command of the keypad and recognizes it as a text input corresponding to a pertinent key.

[0155] For example, if the touch point is a region allocated with key No. 8, the controller **180** recognizes the touch as an input of a character t' corresponding to the key No. 8 and inputs 't' to the text input window **502**.

[0156] If the slide is closed during the text input, namely, when the mobile terminal **100** is in a closed configuration, the controller **180** reduces the region of the text input window **502** and displays a keypad icon **503** at a display region generated resulting from the reduction in the text input window **502**. Accordingly, the user can input text through the keypad icon **503**. Namely, the user can input text by using the display unit **151** implemented as a touch screen as an input device.

[0157] In this embodiment, the case where the region at which the text input window **502** is reduced and the keypad icon **503** is displayed at the display region generated resulting from the reduction of the text input window **502** is taken as an example, but the keypad icon **503** may be overlaid with a portion of the text input window **502**. At this time, the keypad icon **503** may be implemented to have certain transparency.

[0158] FIG. **10** is an overview of display screens illustrating a method for controlling the input device according to a slid state of the mobile terminal according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0159] When the input device is activated for a data input in a state that the mobile terminal **100** is in the closed configuration, the controller **180** displays the keypad icon **503** on the

display unit **151**. At this time, the sensing unit **140** detects the slide state and transmits the detected result to the controller **180**. Namely, the sensing unit detects sliding down and informs the controller **180** accordingly.

[0160] Thereafter, when the mobile terminal **100** is slid up, the sensing unit **140** detects it and informs the controller **180** accordingly. The controller **180** detects the sliding up via the sensing unit **140** and moves the keypad icon **503** displayed on the display unit **151** according to the level of sliding up.

[0161] In other words, when the first body **200** of the mobile terminal **100** is slid in one direction, the controller **180** moves the keypad icon **503** according to an exposure degree of the user input unit **130** of the second body **205** which is exposed according to the slidable movement and displays it accordingly.

[0162] For example, when the first body **200** of the mobile terminal **100** is slid in one direction, the controller **180** moves the keypad icon **503** displayed on the display screen according to the sliding degree. At this time, when two lower rows of the keys constituting the touch keypad of the user input unit **130** are exposed according to the sliding operation, the controller **180** moves the keypad icon **503** displayed on the display screen in one direction. Here, the controller **180** may implement such an effect that a portion of the keypad icon **503** disappears based on the boundary of the display screen according to the movement of the keypad icon **503**.

[0163] In other words, when two rows of the touch keypad of the user input unit **130** are exposed, two rows of the keypad icon **503** displayed on the display screen are concealed. Namely, the two exposed rows of the touch keypad and the two concealed rows of the keypad icon **503** are consistent with each other.

[0164] FIG. **11** is a flow chart illustrating a method for controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to still another embodiment of the present invention.

[0165] First, with the touch pad mode of the user input unit **130** activated, when a text input is requested (S**301**, S**303**), the controller **180** deactivates the touch pad mode of the user input unit **130** and activates the touch keypad mode (S**305**). Namely, the user input unit **130** operates as the touch keypad.

[0166] Thereafter, when a touch applied to the user input unit **130** activated in the touch keypad mode is detected, the controller **180** recognizes it as a text input and recognizes a key input corresponding to the detected touched point (S**307**, S**309**). And the controller **180** displays text (Hangul, English, number, special symbols, and the like) allocated to the inputted key on the display screen (S**311**).

[0167] FIG. **12** is an overview of display screens illustrating an example of controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to the embodiment of FIG. **11**.

[0168] First, when a Web browser function is selected by a user input, the controller **180** connects to a Web site via the wireless Internet module **113**. Namely, the controller **180** drives the Web browser according to the user input. And, the controller **180** displays a Web page received from the connected Web site on the display screen.

[0169] In addition, the controller **180** checks whether a user is to be used for the corresponding function, and if the cursor is to be used, the controller **180** displays the cursor **501** on the Web page displayed on the display screen.

[0170] Thereafter, when a touch applied to the user input unit **130** is detected, the controller **180** controls the cursor **501** based on the detected touch input. For example, when the contact point is moved in a state that a pointer is in contact with the user input unit **130**, the controller **180** moves the cursor **501** according to the movement of the contact point of the pointer. Accordingly, the user can move the cursor **501** to a desired position on the Web page through dragging.

[0171] After the cursor is moved to a text input window **504** on the Web page, when the text input window **502** is selected, the controller **180** establishes an environment for receiving text. Namely, the controller **180** deactivates the touch pad mode of the user input unit **130** and activates the touch keypad mode.

[0172] With the touch keypad mod activated, when a touch applied to the user input unit **130** is detected, the controller **180** recognizes it as a key input corresponding to the detected touched point and displays corresponding text on the text window. As shown, when a touch applied to a key region allocated 'G', the controller **180** inputs 'G' to the text input window **504**.

[0173] FIG. **13** illustrates a method for controlling the input device of the mobile terminal according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0174] First, the sensing unit **140** detects a slide state of the mobile terminal **100**, and transmits a corresponding result to the controller **180**. When the slide state is changed from the closed configuration to the open configuration, the controller **180** displays a setting screen image allowing selecting of an operation mode of the user input unit **130**.

[0175] When an operation mode of the user input unit **130** is selected from the displayed setting screen and the selected mode is different from a previous operation mode, the controller **180** changes the operation mode of the user input unit **130** to the selected operation mode. At this time, the controller **180** may display a notification message informing that the operation mode of the user input unit **130** is changed.

[0176] Thereafter, the controller **180** may execute a particular function according to a touch input applied via the user input unit **130** or move the cursor displayed on the display screen.

[0177] In this embodiment, the case where the operation mode of the user input unit **130** is selected when the slide of the mobile terminal **100** is open is taken as an example, but it may be implemented such that the operation mode of the user input unit **130** can be selected when the slide of the mobile terminal **100** is closed.

[0178] As so far described, the mobile terminal according to at least one embodiment of the present invention can provide the input device that can be used as the touch keypad and/or the touch pad. Accordingly, the present invention can provide a suitable input device according to an operation mode of the mobile terminal.

[0179] In addition, the operation mode of the input device can be controlled according to an application program.

[0180] Also, a particular function can be executed only through drag input (gesture) without viewing the display screen.

[0181] Moreover, because the cursor (mouse pointer) is controlled by using the input device as a touch pad in Web browsing, a particular object of a small area can be selected, allowing the user to perform Web browsing conveniently.

[0182] As the exemplary embodiments may be implemented in several forms without departing from the characteristics thereof, it should also be understood that the above-described embodiments are not limited by any of the details of the foregoing description, unless otherwise specified, but rather should be construed broadly within its scope as defined

in the appended claims. Therefore, various changes and modifications that fall within the scope of the claims, or equivalents of such scope are therefore intended to be embraced by the appended claims.

[0183] In the embodiments of the present invention, the above-described method can be implemented as software codes that can be read by a computer in a program-recorded medium. The computer-readable medium includes various types of recording devices in which data read by a computer system is stored. The computer-readable medium may include a ROM, a RAM, a CD-ROM, a magnetic tape, a floppy disk, an optical data storage device, and the like. The computer-readable medium also includes implementations in the form of carrier waves or signals (e.g., transmission via the Internet). The computer may include the controller **180** of the terminal.

[0184] The mobile terminal according to the embodiments of the present invention is not limited in its application of the configurations and methods, but the entirety or a portion of the embodiments can be selectively combined to be configured into various modifications.

1. A mobile terminal comprising:

an input unit having a keypad layer and a touch-sensor layer that overlap each other, the keypad layer including or associated with one or more characters; and

a controller to control the input unit to operate in a touch pad mode or a touch keypad mode according to whether or not a cursor is in use on a display screen of the mobile terminal.

2. The mobile terminal of claim **1**, wherein when the cursor is in use, the controller activates the input unit to operate in touch pad mode.

3. The mobile terminal of claim **1**, wherein when the cursor is not in use, the controller activates the input unit to operate in a touch keypad mode.

4. The mobile terminal of claim **1**, wherein the controller activates the input unit to operate in touch pad mode or touch keypad mode according to a predetermined function of the mobile terminal, said predetermined function involving use of the cursor of the display screen.

5. The mobile terminal of claim **4**, wherein when the mobile terminal is changed to a text input mode in a state where the input unit is activated in touch pad mode, the controller changes an operational mode of the input unit into the touch keypad mode.

6. The mobile terminal of claim **1**, wherein in a state where the input unit is activated in the touch pad mode and the touch keypad mode, the controller recognizes a touch pad input or a touch keypad input according to a touch input applied to the input unit.

7. The mobile terminal of claim **6**, wherein if the touch input is dragging, the controller recognizes the touch input as a touch pad input and executes a function corresponding to the dragging.

8. The mobile terminal of claim **6**, wherein if the touch input is not dragging, the controller recognizes the touch input as a key input of the touch keypad and displays a character corresponding to the key input.

9. The mobile terminal of claim **1**, further comprising:

a sensor to sense opening and closing of the mobile terminal.

10. The mobile terminal of claim **9**, wherein the controller controls the input unit to operate in a first predetermined mode when the sensor detects opening of the mobile terminal, and controls the input unit to operate in a second predetermined mode when the sensor detects closing of the mobile terminal.

11. The mobile terminal of claim **10**, wherein the first and second predetermined modes correspond to at least one of the touch pad mode or the touch keypad mode.

12. The mobile terminal of claim **1**, wherein the one or more characters include on or more numbers, letters, or symbols.

13. A method for controlling a mobile terminal, comprising:

checking whether or not a cursor is in use when a certain function of the mobile terminal is executed; and

activating the input device to operate in at least one of a touch pad mode or a touch keypad mode based on whether or not the cursor is in use.

14. The method of claim **13**, wherein said activating comprises:

if the cursor has been set to be used, activating the input device to operate in touch pad mode; and

controlling the cursor according to a touch input via the input device.

15. The method of claim **13**, wherein said activating comprises:

if the cursor has not been set to be used, activating the input device to operate in touch keypad mode; and

when a touch applied to the input device is detected, generating a key input signal corresponding to a location where the touch occurred relative to the keypad.

16. The method of claim **13**, further comprising:

when the input device is controlled to operate in touch pad mode, changing an input mode to operate in text mode; and

changing the touch pad mode to the touch keypad mode.

17. The method of claim **16**, wherein when the input device is controlled to operate in touch keypad mode and the mobile terminal is in a closed configuration, the touch keypad mode of the input device is deactivated and a keypad icon is displayed on a display unit of the mobile terminal.

18. A mobile terminal comprising:

an input unit;

a display screen;

at least one sensor; and

a controller to control the input unit to operate in at least one of a keypad mode or a touch pad mode based on one or more conditions.

19. The mobile terminal of claim **18**, wherein the one or more conditions include a type of touch signal detected by the input unit.

20. The mobile terminal of claim **19**, wherein the controller controls the input unit to operate in touch pad mode when the touch signal corresponds to a dragging motion on the input unit.

21. The mobile terminal of claim **20**, wherein the controller automatically activates a predetermined function of the mobile terminal that operates based on signals received through the touch pad mode when the touch signal corresponds to said dragging operation.

22. The mobile terminal of claim **21**, wherein the controller automatically activates said predetermined function when the touch signal corresponds to a dragging operation performed in a predetermined pattern.

23. The mobile terminal of claim **22**, wherein the predetermined pattern is a circular pattern.

24. The mobile terminal of claim **19**, wherein the controller controls the input unit to operate in keypad mode when the touch signal corresponds to a touch at only one location on the input unit, the controller recognizing the touch signal as a character corresponding to said location on the input unit.

25. The mobile terminal of claim **24**, wherein the character includes at least one of a number, letter, or symbol.

26. The mobile terminal of claim **18**, wherein the one or more conditions include activation of a predetermined function of the mobile terminal, the controller controlling the input unit to operate in keypad mode or touch pad mode based on activation of said predetermined function.

27. The mobile terminal of claim **26**, wherein the controller controls the input unit to operate in touch pad mode when the predetermined activated function operates based on movement of a cursor on the display screen.

28. A mobile terminal comprising:

a detector;

a display screen; and

a controller to control operation of the mobile terminal, wherein the controller controls the screen to display a virtual keypad when the detector detects that the mobile terminal is in a closed state and blocks display of the virtual keypad when the detector detects the mobile terminal is in an open state, wherein a physical keypad is accessible by a user in the open state and the physical keypad is inaccessible by a user in the closed state.

29. The mobile terminal of claim **28**, wherein, when the mobile terminal is placed in a partial state where only a first portion of the physical keypad is accessible by a user, the controller controls the screen to display a virtual keypad that includes the second portion of the physical keypad not accessible by the user, and wherein the accessible first portion of the physical keypad and the second portion of the virtual keypad are simultaneously activated in said partial state.

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